ORMSKIRK & WEST LANCASHIRE
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INSIDE! Sir Roger Moore talks to the Champ!

Amelia (right) with Miss British Isle 2016 winner Rebecca Lake

Amelia crowned Miss Teen English Rose

An Aughton girl has become an English Rose after winning a a national modelling competition.

Seventeen-year-old model and former St Bedes High School pupil, Amelia-Jane Burgess was crowned Miss Teen English Rose at a competition held at the Vincent Hotel in Southport.

Amelia will now be put forward for the finals of Miss British Isle which takes place next March.

FITTING TRIBUTE TO TOWN'S WAR FALLEN

A FITTING tribute to soldiers from Ormskirk who died fighting during two world wars, has been installed in Coronation Park in time for the town's Remembrance services.

by Danielle Thompson

Stone plinths bearing the names of local soldiers who lost their lives during the conflicts, have been erected next to the Ormskirk Comrades War Memorial.

The names have been taken from existing printed 1914-18 and 1939-45 Rolls of Honour.

The first plinth bears the names of the First World War fallen, while the other shows additional First World War as well as World War Two names.

The plinths were installed in time for Ormskirk's Remembrance Sunday Services which are due to take place on Sunday (November 13).

Erecting the stone plinths was phase two of a project started by West Lancashire Borough Council when it moved the memorial from outside the former Comrades Club site on Southport Road to its current location in Coronation Park.

The council carried out extensive research before work began on the plinths to make sure all the names taken from the existing rolls of honour were correct.

This involved officials asking the public to help make sure that their findings were accurate before the names were inscribed on the stone plinths.

Councillor Yvonne Gagen, portfolio holder whose responsibilities include the Ormskirk War Memorial, said: "The Council understands that it is very important for communities to remember the fallen servicemen and women who have given their lives for their country.

"We are very grateful to everyone who helped us make sure the names are correct and are delighted that the plinths were installed in time for this year's Remembrance Sunday Service."

The new stone plinths have been erected next to the Ormskirk Comrades War Memorial in Coronation Park

Councillor Yvonne Gagen

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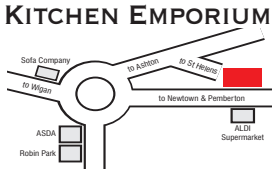

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Borough landmarks to be lit up in support of cancer awareness

ORMSKIRK Clock Tower and the Lightcube in Skelmersdale are set to shine purple for 12 days to raise awareness of pancreatic cancer.

West Lancs Council has arranged for the structures to be lit up from Saturday, November 19 to Wednesday, November 30 between dusk and dawn as part of Pancreatic Cancer Action's 'turn it purple' campaign.

Pancreatic Cancer Action aims to raise awareness and funds of the condition to drive earlier diagnosis and more effective treatments for pancreatic cancer.

Every day, 26 men and women will be newly-diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

The disease is the fifth deadliest cancer in the UK but is often misdiagnosed and patients go to see their GP 13 times on average before the disease is correctly identified.

This leads to sufferers being faced with a shockingly low 5% chance of survival and an average life expectancy of just three to six months.

Correct early diagnosis increases the chance of survival tenfold, but according to Pancreatic Cancer UK 74 per cent of people in the UK cannot name a single symptom of pancreatic cancer.

The clock tower will be lit up purple one more to support pancreatic cancer awareness

If you or a member of your family have one or more of the following symptoms then you should seek medical advice:

- Mid-back pain
- Upper abdominal pain
- Pain on eating
- Indigestion
- New onset diabetes
- Unexplained weight loss
- Fatigue
- Pale and smelly stools
- Jaundice
- Low mood or depression

Mayor of West Lancs, Councillor Liz Savage, said: "West Lancashire Borough Council is delighted to be taking part in 'turn it purple' again this year. Ormskirk Clock Tower and the Lightcube in Sklelmersdale are two of our borough's most distinctive landmarks and we hope lighting up these two structures will increase awareness of pancreatic cancer."

Although November as a whole is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month Ormskirk Clock Tower and the Lightcube will be lit purple from November 19 to 30. This is because the structures are being lit red by the council between July to November 18 to mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

To find out more about pancreatic cancer please visit www.pancreaticcanceraction.org.

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Plans for new Linnets ground recommended for approval

Report by **Danielle Thompson**

PLANS to create a new football ground for Burscough FC are set to be given the green light.

Development company, Chequer Properties, submitted a planning application to West Lancs Borough Council in August last year to create a replacement ground for the Linnets.

Plans include a new 105 metre by 70 metre pitch, a two–storey 480-seat main stand and clubhouse, single–storey secondary stand, floodlighting, terracing and a car park to the west of the current ground, with access from Bobby Langton Way.

The clubhouse, which would feature solar roof panels, would incorporate changing facilities and toilets for home and away teams and officials along with a storage area downstairs and a bar/function room on the first floor.

The borough council's planning officers have recommended that the development is granted planning permission, subject to a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 at the next monthly planning committee meeting this week.

An artists' impression of how the new ground would look

In November 2015, the Champion revealed that Burscough Independent Supporters Association, had launched a 'Fighting Fund' to raise £200,000 to help them keep Burscough FC at their Victoria Park home and become a fan–owned club.

They objected to the plans on the grounds that the current club could be upgraded instead of moved; there will be no youth pitches; the land chosen for the new ground is prone to flooding and that the new ground could affect protected birds including swans and pink–footed geese as it is a feeding ground for them – a concern also lodged by representatives from nearby Martin Mere Wetland Centre.

Burscough Parish Council also raised a number of objections to the plans including the risk of flooding; the access road interfering with the emergency exit; insufficient parking; loss of grade one agricultural land; and the fact that the proposed stadium is smaller than the existing ground.

The planning officers have made a number of recommendations including the use of additional parking at Burscough Priory Science College and Skelmersdale United.

They have also stated that permission should be granted on a number of conditions including that the work should be started within the next three years and that the pitch and floodlights would only be used between 8am and 10pm from Monday to Saturday and from 8am-8pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

They also state that the site would be drained on a separate system, with only foul drainage connected to the public sewerage system – so no surface water would be allowed to discharge in to the public sewerage system via direct or indirect means. They also stated that tree felling, vegetation clearance works, demolition work or other works that could affect nesting birds would also need to be undertaken between March and August.

As part of the planning application club chairman Mike Swift said Burscough FC prided itself on being part of the community and wanted a stadium the whole community could take pride in.

He said the new stadium would have high class state of the art facilities bringing prestige to the club and the town; spectator accommodation would be spacious and comfortable with ease of access improved beyond all recognition and that the new facilities would enable the club to improve links with the local community.

He said: "The football club is ambitious - the new ground will bring the real prospect of increased attendances and give the club the opportunity to progress on and off the pitch."

Scarisbrick memorial is unveiled

SCARISBRICK Parish Council have unveiled a new memorial to soldiers in the parish who gave their lives during the First World War.

The memorial in the grounds of Scarisbrick Village Hall was created from polished black granite and features the names of 64 local men who perished during the conflict. A frieze around the base depicts a horse-drawn plough with poppies and sheaves of corn, emphasising the strong link between the parish's agricultural heritage and the sacrifice of its men.

John Herbert, Scarisbrick Parish Councillor said: "The memorial will provide a focal point for the community to pay tribute. Many of the soldiers' families still live in the parish and identify with their ancestors. Such memorials provide closure for relatives – bearing in mind that circumstances often dictated that remains were not returned home.

"In 2014, the parish council brought together a working group of local residents to explore ways in which the centenary of the conflict could be commemorated. Evidence emerged that existing memorials within the parish were incomplete and painstaking research by members of the group revealed an additional 30 names.

The new black granite memorial

"The need for a new fully inclusive memorial was apparent and the group set about raising funds. These were raised through donations from Scarisbrick residents as well as West Lancashire Heritage Association and the work was completed by local firms Ormsby of Scarisbrick and Dave Finney Landscapes.

"Work continues to complete the second part of the centenary project, the installation of memorial books within Scarisbrick's churches and schools. Not satisfied with simply identifying names, the books will tell the stories of these men as individuals and the conditions in which they served.

They also provide the opportunity to commemorate the contribution of a group of men who are often forgotten - those who served and came home. A code on the memorial will link to a website which will also contain the biographies."

An ecumenical service of dedication will be held at Scarisbrick Village Hall at 11am on Armistice Day (Friday, November 11). This will include the calling of the names and all members of the public are welcome to attend.

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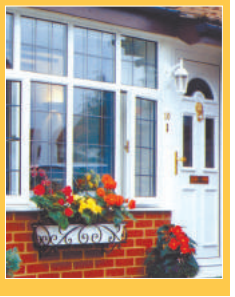

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Stuart Brunst with daughter, Anita

Hospital bosses say lessons will be learned after man died from broken leg op

Report by **Ollie Cowan**

BOSSES at Southport and Formby Hospital say major lessons will be learned after a 67-year-old man died following what was supposed to be a routine operation to mend a broken leg.

As reported in some editions of the Champion last week, Stuart Brunst, from Aughton, died in October last year, just three weeks after undergoing surgery at Southport District General Hospital for a broken femur.

Following the operation it was found that screws were inserted incorrectly and became dislodged. Stuart sadly passed away after developing a fat embolism, the results of a coroner's inquest confirmed.

His daughter, Anita Brunst, instructed expert medical negligence lawyers to investigate the treatment her father was provided with by the Trust and to assist the family with an inquest into his death.

As part of the investigations, it has now been discovered that the NHS Trust did not comply with their obligations under the Duty of Candour rules as it failed to tell the family about an internal investigation into the death for 10 months.

Ian McInnes, interim chief executive at Southport, Formby and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, told the Champion: "We wish to offer our sincere condolences to Mr Brunst's family for the loss of their much loved family member. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to them.

"The Trust accepts there were failures in the care provided to Mr Brunst and that with appropriate care it is likely his death might have been avoided. We apologise unreservedly to Mr Brunst's family for this.

"Following Mr Brunst's death, the Trust launched an investigation to thoroughly examine the care he received at the Trust, and to establish the facts to determine if there had been any avoidable harm.

"This was a complicated investigation and we would like to apologise to the family for the time it took for the relevant facts to be established and for contact to be made with the family; together with the associated distress this may have caused.

"As a result of the investigation we identified lessons to be learnt in light of Mr Brunst's very sad death and we have made a number of changes to significantly strengthen and improve our procedures."

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Food plan for Scotch Piper pub leaves a bad taste with landlady who quits in protest

Report by **Jim Sharpe**

The Scotch Piper in Lydiate

IT will be a sad day on Tuesday, November 15 for the regulars at Lydiate's historic Scotch Piper pub.

That will be the day when licensee Julie Pringle is to give up what to her was a labour of love after owners, Chester-based Admiral Taverns informed her that they intend to turn her much-loved pub – always known as the oldest in Lancashire and now most certainly the oldest on Merseyside, with the building dating back to 1320 and in use as a pub since the 15th century – into a 'food house'.

Julie, who worked at the Scotch Piper as a teenage barmaid, took over the pub, in March 2014 with her then business partner Phil Moran, is certain this will ruin the atmosphere of the CAMRA listed 'Good Beer Guide' and their Liverpool Community Pub of the Year last year.

"Admiral seem hell-bent on turning it into just another 'food pub'," Julie told the Champion.

They said if I couldn't agree to serving all-day food then they would find someone who would – so I suppose that is what they'll have to do.

"The fact is that most of my regulars come to this pub because we aren't a 'food pub'. We are a simple pub within the local community and they like it as it is.

I told Admiral this but they won't listen.

"It's more like a family here - we have customers who are millionaires and others who haven't two pennies to rub together but they all mix and chat together. Quirky people in a quirky pub – which is what the Scotch Piper is and what people want it to be. It is a community pub in the best sense of the word.

"It has always been a traditional pub and has never served food."

The Scotch Piper has become famous for its car club nights and bikers' nights during the summer and there is also a folk club.

Julie is saddened that she has to leave, but feels she has no choice.

"What it seems Admiral are proposing is simply not in the best interests of the pub or its customers," she said.

"I am going to miss my customers so much."

Admiral Taverns' Liverpool Business Development Manager, Tom Jones, said: "We are sorry to see her leave but support her decision and wish her well in the future."

"We are now looking for a new licensee to take over the running of the business and ensure it remains firmly at the heart of the community.

"The Scotch Piper is a charming pub, a real gem, steeped in history and, with the right licensee Admiral Taverns is keen to invest in and develop the pub - this investment may or may not include a food offer."

But none of this has gone down well with the pub's regulars. They have got up a petition asking Admiral to have a rethink and already signatures fill three full A4 pages. The petition says: "We are the local community – we delight in the Scotch Piper and do not want it to become a food pub."

But it is all too late for Julie.

"I have had an absolute ball here and I've met some fantastic people.

"Of course it has been hard work but it's been well worth the effort."

Funeral held for former district council chairman

THE funeral has been held of former West Lancs District Council chairman, Eric Kells.

Grandfather-of-three Alexander Charles Kells, known as Eric, passed away peacefully aged 83 on Sunday, October 23.

The former councillor is survived by his wife Rhona and their three children Gordon, Janine and Rowena. His funeral service was held at Emmanuel Church in Ormskirk on Friday, November 4, followed by cremation at West Lancs Crematorium.

A West Lancs Borough Council spokesperson said: "The council was deeply saddened to hear news that past Chairman and Councillor, Eric Kells, had passed away. Our condolences go to his family and friends.

"Eric was elected to serve on the West Lancashire District Council in 1976 representing Derby Ward and served on the Council, for that Ward, until 1995.

"During his time as a Councillor he was Chairman of the Council in the Municipal Year 1989-1990. He also served as Chairman of the Leisure Services Committee; Leisure & Amenities Committee; Arts Sub-Committee; Technical Services Committee and the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Sub-Committee at different times during his years as a Councillor."

Mr Kells was also a governor of the former Ormskirk Grammar School."

Arts talk at Edge Hill

A GUEST speaker will be sharing his advice on the benefits of the arts in a free talk at Edge Hill University later this month.

Darren Henley OBE, the head of Arts Council England, will visit the university and give his cultural talk at 6pm at the Creative Edge on Wednesday, November 30.

He will also discuss his recently published book The Arts Dividend with Professor Roger Shannon, Director of Edge Hill's Institute for Creative Enterprise.

The Arts Dividend looks in depth at seven key benefits that art and culture bring to our lives: the nation's creativity; advancing education; benefits in health and wellbeing; innovation and technology; place making in villages, towns and cities; economic prosperity; and enhancing England's reputation for cultural excellence on the global stage.

Professor Roger Shannon said: "I am delighted that Darren Henley will visit Edge Hill to discuss the key benefits that the arts and culture bring to our lives, drawing on both the Arts Council's ambitious plans and on his own visionary thinking in The Arts Dividend."

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Trust chiefs quash claims over town's A&E facility

SOUTHPORT & Formby hospital chiefs say they are set to invest over £600,000 a year in Accident and Emergency services at the site – despite reports that emerged last week claiming the facility would be 'downgraded.'

Fears for the A&E at Southport surfaced in a recently published Government Sustainability and Transformation plan which suggested a possibility of a reduced or 'downgraded' A&E service at a number of hospitals in Merseyside and Chesire – including the Town Lane hospital.

However Southport Hospital Interim Chief Executive Iain McInnes says that any such plans in the future would be the subject of intense consultation before they were rubber stamped, adding that the local A&E service is actually set for a major funding overhaul with £613,000 promised in additional annual funding for staff there.

The funding announcement is in stark contrast to fears raised by Southport MP John Pugh, who says: "Secret plans to downgrade A&E facilities in the Merseyside and Cheshire Region have been hastily withdrawn by NHS bosses but that does not mean they are forgotten or won't happen.

"In the plans Southport A&E was to be downgraded despite being heavily in demand.

"Critical emergencies might have to go to Whiston or further. The plans demanded by the Conservative government are called 'Sustainability and Transformation Plans.'

"I believe that the threat has not gone away and I am urging all Southport residents to register their opposition online at www.southportsays.co.uk

"Fear of a public backlash is the only thing stopping NHS insiders proceeding with this plan and we must show the measure of the opposition to these proposals which are fundamentally dangerous and desperate.

"Its all about saving money by reducing critical services."

Iain McInnes, interim Chief Executive at Southport and Ormskirk NHS Hospital Trust, told The Champion: "The Trust has agreed to invest £613,000 annually in additional nurse staffing at A&E at Southport Hospital.

"Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) are a new approach to help ensure health and care services are built around the needs of local people.

"The STP does signal intentions in some areas to conduct reviews of current urgent and emergency care services, and to assess whether there may be clinical or sustainability issues which should be addressed.

"This may lead over time to options being proposed to change the way some services may be delivered in the future.

"Any proposals to change A&E services would have to have a strong clinical evidence base and demonstrate a positive impact in terms of quality, safety and sustainability. They would also be subject to public engagement and consultation.

"At this stage, ideas are at a formative stage, based on input from clinicians and staff. It is important that we are open about the significant challenges we will face over the next five years in tackling poor health, improving quality and ensuring these services are sustainable in a period of financial constraint. All proposals that will emerge from the STP seek to address these challenges, including the future design of urgent and emergency care.

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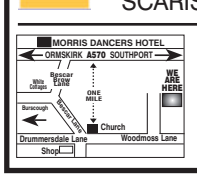

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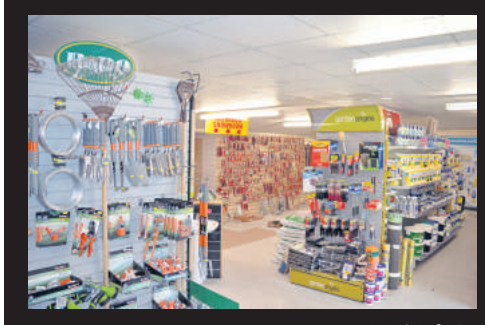

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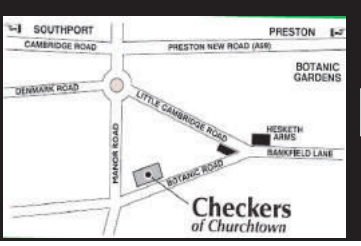

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Family's festive fundraiser for hospital baby unit

THE family of a young boy who defied the odds to survive after being born 10 weeks early are hosting a family Christmas shopping-themed event to fund more potentially life-saving equipment for the hospital ward where he received treatment.

Emma and Lee Graham, from Formby, started fundraising for Ormskirk Hospital's Neonatal Unit after their son Theo was born almost three months prematurely weighing just 2lb 8oz in October 2012.

Theo, now a healthy three-year-old, was cared for by staff at the unit for those crucial first few weeks of his life when he was at his most vulnerable. Since then a grateful Emma and Lee have organised a number of fundraising events on behalf of the hospital.

Their Family Christmas Shopping Evening will be held on Friday, November 25 from 5.30 to 9.30pm at St Jerome's Parish Centre in Greenloons Drive, Formby. It will feature gift stalls including flowers, toiletries and jams, face-painting, nail bar and live music.

The family held a Baby, Toddler and Children's Event last month which raised £560 and are hoping to raise £1,500 before Christmas to help the Neonatal Unit's fundraising drive.

The unit needs 12 incubators, which cost around £15,000 each, and 12 monitors costing around £7,000 each.

Tickets for the event are £1 for adults (£2 on the door) and admission is free for children. For more information, call Emma on 07979062082 or email Neonatalunitfundraiser@outlook.com.

Emma and Lee Graham with Theo and fun characters Peppa and Chase at their last fundraising event

Katie and Gareth (3rd and 4th left) present the cot to beareavement midwife, Angie Cullen and neonatal unit manager, Karen Wareing, watched by David McGurrell from 4 Louis.

Bereaved couple's 'special' gift

A COUPLE who lost their twin sons after they were born four months prematurely have presented a specialist cot to the Neonatal Unit at Ormskirk Hospital.

Gareth Lee and Katie Jennings raised the money for the 'cuddle cot' through the 4 Louis charity, which supports bereaved families.

The couple, who are now expecting again, were spurred to fundraise on behalf of the unit after they lost sons Rory and Oliver, when they were born at just 21 weeks. The cot has a special cold mattress which allows babies to stay with their families for a few days following their death.

Angie Cullen, bereavement midwife at the hospital, said: "We're very grateful to Gareth and Katie who understand how valuable the use of a cuddle cot can be at such a sad time, and to the 4 Louis charity for continuing to provide us with equipment."

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

Martin Mere news

In the last week WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre has won the award for Most Family Friendly Attraction in the Southport Ambassador Awards.

The awards celebrate the achievement of people and businesses in the hospitality, tourism and leisure industry and Martin Mere was judged on the overall attraction, including accessibility, customer service and signage.

Centre Manager, Nick Brooks, said: "This is the first time we have been involved in the Southport Ambassador Awards – it is not something we can enter, you have to be nominated by your visitors which is why winning an award like this means a great deal to the centre. The judging was based on a mixture of public votes and a mystery shop which shows how this is a real team effort and everyone at the centre is very proud to have won it – and of course a big thank you to everyone who voted for us."

This award win is yet another great boost to the centre which has recently been promoting working with Burscough Parish Council to re-brand Burscough as Home of the Whooper Swan – an initiative to use the centres popularity and uniqueness to bring more people into Burscough to boost the local economy. Nick continues: "awards like this are really going to help us in promoting the local area and encouraging more people to stay overnight and explore the wildlife, canals and heritage that Burscough has to offer whilst they are here."

In other news at the centre, there are still over 27,000 pink-footed geese using the reserve and 600 Whooper swans have already made the migration to spend the winter at Martin Mere. The first Hen Harrier for the winter has been seen along with other raptors including Marsh Harrier, 2 adult Peregrine, 2 Sparrowhawk and 2 Kestrel. The mere is slowly filling up with birds with over 1000 Black-headed gulls regularly on the mere and over 2000 mallard coming from Europe to over winter here. As usual it should be possible to see at least 50 species of bird in a day without too much effort. If you are visiting the reserve, pop in to the in focus shop (next to the Discovery Hide) where we have a full list of birds, and should be able to point you in the right direction to get the most out of your visit.

WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre is open every day (except Christmas Day) from 9.30am to 4.30pm during winter months and parking is free of charge. Situated off the A59, it is signposted from the M61, M58 and M6. The Centre is also accessible via the Southport to Manchester and the Liverpool to Preston line by train from Burscough Rail Stations. Visit the web site http://www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere/ to find out what's on all year round at Martin Mere and the other eight WWT Wetland Centres.

Visit the web site www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere to find out what's on the reserve at the moment as well as all the upcoming events

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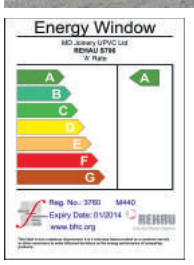

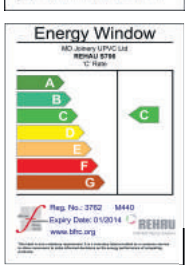

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Chance to get your dogs microchipped by council for free

WEST Lancs Council chiefs are helping dog owners in the borough to avoid falling foul of the law by organising a microchpping event for their pets.

New legislation came into force earlier this year which made it a legal requirement for all dogs to be microchipped and their details kept up to date.

Anyone failing to meet these requirements can be served with a 21-day notice giving them the opportunity to get their dogs chipped. Further failure to comply could result in prosecution and a fine of up to £500.

Also, dogs with microchips that are not up to date will be deemed as not microchipped and owners will again be served with a 21 day notice to complete the update.

The microchip needs to be registered to the dog's keeper and their address, which means to the person and to the address where the dog habitually resides.

To help people comply with the new law the council has teamed up with the Dogs Trust to provide free microchipping for dogs in the borough on Tuesday, November 15.

This will be held at Tanhouse Community Centre, Skelmersdale. The microchipping will start at 11am and the queue will close at an appropriate point to ensure that the last dog is seen at 3pm.

Dog owners in West Lancashire are being urged to take advantage of the council's free microchipping event to avoid falling foul of new legislation

Councillor Kevin Wright, West Lancs Council's folio holder for community safety, said: "If you have a dog which is not microchipped please come along to our event where the procedure can be carried out with no charge.

Exempt

"It is very important that people comply with this legislation or they could be prosecuted and face a heavy fine."

Dogs may only be exempt from chipping if they have a certificate from a vet. The new law does not replace the requirement for a dog to wear a collar and tag in a public place. It is an additional piece of legislation. Currently dog owners can be fined up to £5,000 for not having a collar and tags on their dogs.

Although cats cannot be microhipped at the event, the council is also advising owners of feline friends that there are benefits to getting their cat microchipped.

For example, if a cat is unfortunately killed in a road accident there is a possibility it may be brought back to a council depot. If it has a microchip then staff may be able to scan the cat and contact the owner.

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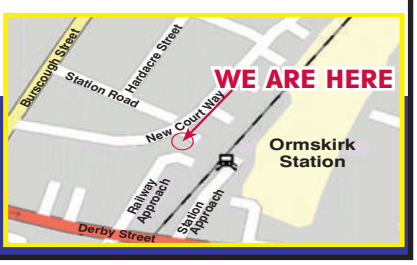

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'Mini hospitals' down your street could be future of health care, says Healthwatch chief

Report by **Henry James**

THE future of health care in the county is "local...very local", according to Mike Wedgeworth. the chair of Healthwatch Lancashire, the public voice for health and social care.

Writing on the group's website, he said: "According to NHS Digital, around 90% of patient interaction is with primary care services, such as GPs, and their role is set to expand.

"All the experts agree that the number of patients who go to hospital needs to be reduced by treating some of them closer to home.

"This is likely to be in 'hubs' where several GPs work together as a team, along with nurses, physios, pharmacists, care workers, admin staff and possibly even representatives of charities.

"Hospital-based consultants could join in a conversation with the patient and the GP in the local surgery via Skype, or could actually be there in person for half a day a week.

"People might call this a 'mini-hospital down their street.'"

Mr Wedgeworth added that some GP practices in Lancashire were already heading in this direction but said there's a long way to go before it could cover the county.

Mike Wedgeworth, chair of Healthwatch Lancashire,

Healthwatch Lancashire has found that although local people are passionate about retaining their local hospitals they are willing for the range of treatments to be expanded within their local surgeries and communities.

This was further supported by findings from the watchdog's 13 recent visits to GP surgeries, carried out since May 2016 across Lancashire, which show on average more than 98% of patients expressed appreciation for staff in the practices.

Meanwhile, outlined in the General Practice Forward View from NHS England, it is planning, and has promised funding for, 5,000 more GPs by 2020, 3,000 practice-based mental health therapists, 1,500 pharmacists and money for more practice nurses, physician assistants, practice managers and receptionists.

Mike Wedgeworth added: "The problem for Lancashire is that we are already way short of our fair share of GPs. Your doctor is likely to have 220 more patients than the national average and 340 more than practices in the South of England. Also, a higher proportion than nationally are likely to retire in the next few years. Encouragingly though, we do have more general practice staff than the national average.

"Of course, we can't compel doctors to work here. But financial incentives are available, and with the expansion of training places at both the University of Central Lancashire and Lancaster University, it is likely that would-be GPs who know what a great county they are studying in will be motivated to practice here when they qualify.

"We certainly need them to."

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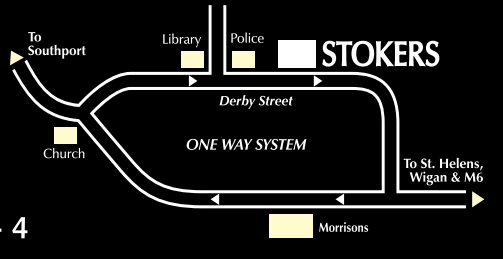

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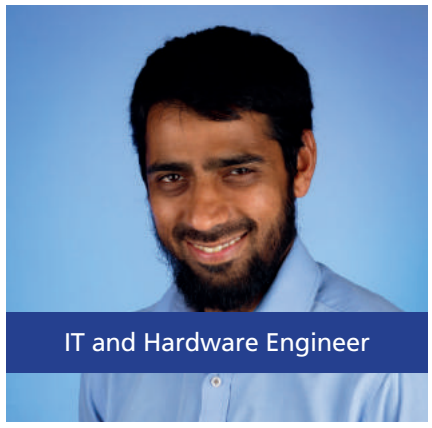

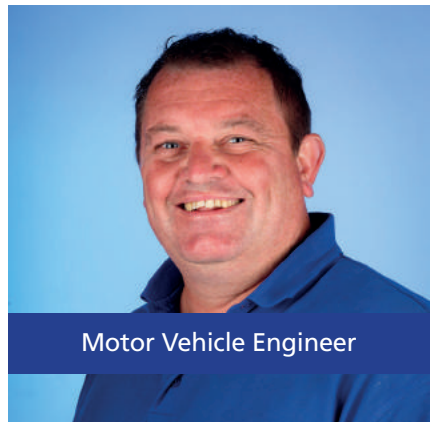

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Knife surrender sees 140 weapons handed in to police

Report by **Danielle Thompson**

A TOTAL of 140 weapons were handed in during Lancashire Constabulary's two-week knife surrender.

The force held the surrender from October 17 to 31 as part of a national initiative aimed at tackling knife crime and removing potentially lethal weapons from the streets.

Among the weapons given up - which included 30 in Skelmersdale, Preston, Chorley and South Ribble - were penknives, machetes, swords, axes, zombie knives, kitchen knives and large blades.

Officers will now safely dispose of all the items that were handed in.

Test purchasing operations were also carried out as part of the action against knife crime, with the force using police cadet volunteers to check on businesses selling knives or blades.

Some of the knives that were handed in during the amnesty

'Pleasing response'

The majority of premises across the county were compliant with the law and the few that failed are now working with officers and trading standards to resolve the issues, improve their standards and amend the training that staff receive.

But despite the surrender coming to an end, police say people can continue to hand in any knife at any police station with a front counter.

Chief Inspector Mark Baines said: "We've been delighted with the response from our communities throughout the surrender, and it's really pleasing to see all of the items passed to us are now in safe hands and can't cause harm to anyone.

"I would still like to appeal to youngsters that carrying a knife doesn't offer them protection, and not only is being in possession of a knife in a public place a criminal offence, young people are also more likely to be stabbed and seriously injured with their own weapon.

"We don't want this to happen to anyone in Lancashire and you can still hand in a weapon at one of our front counters to dispose of it safely."

Young people are encouraged to log onto the Trust Ed website at www.trusted2know.co.uk to find out more about knife crime and the dangers of carrying a knife on Lancashire's streets.

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Main Image: The Hidden Garden Of Sandy Lane by One Red Shoe

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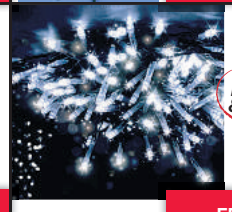

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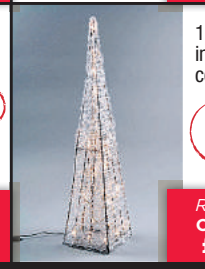

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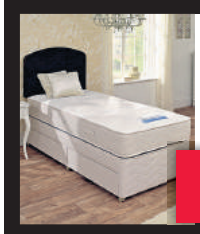

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Champion LETTERS to the Editor

Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA
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What we need is technology to provide safe, cleaner energy - not fracking!

AS a concerned resident of West Lancs, I also attended the recent oil and gas regulators drop-in. My impression was very different from the anonymous Aughton resident (Letters, October 26).

Definitely the staff there from all the different agencies were extremely courteous, well-informed and professional. It did not take me long though to realise that these people were just doing the job they had trained for and had put into practice on their 'drop-ins' around the country over the past months.

I put several questions to them on the matters that worried me after my own at least two-year research into fracking all over the world and all the documents, reviews etc., available on line.

The EA representative I spoke to did not know that West Lancs was Grade I agricultural land, nor did he know that our area had a big flooding problem.

When I asked how was this going to be dealt with, I was told that procedures would be put in place to make sure that there was no pollution of soil or water courses.

When I asked what experience they had had of monitoring a fracking site, they hadn't any. No experience at all of that industry. The only monitoring would be done from their nearest office from data supplied periodically by the fracking contractors!

In Blackpool it took them six months to admit they had caused the two earth tremors even though their well casing was turned from a sphere to an oval.

I also asked about where the fracking waste was being dealt with, both liquid and solid, bearing in mind it would contain radioactive traces and extremely hazardous chemicals.

I was informed that the liquid would be taken in large tankers to specialist processing sites around the country. These, it seems, are not yet able to handle this waste! The solid waste was to be buried deep in the ground in other defined places.

Numerous large tankers and lorries containing hazardous material, daily, passing through our rural towns and villages, on unsuitable country lanes and roads, on route to the motorways. How our vociferous complaints can be unfounded, is beyond me.

Anyone who condones fracking cannot know a lot about it, because once you start to research, it becomes very obvious that there has not been anywhere in the world where it has been and continues to be a safe process.

The fossil fuel industry is subsidised by billions of pounds of taxpayers' money. This needs to be given to the new technologies which will bring us safe, cleaner energy to meet our needs and not industrialise and destroy our farmland.

Mrs Mel Tarplee,
Halsall

Promise of jobs and cheaper fuel is just political hype

WITH reference to the letter headed "Vociferous complaints about gas exploration 'unfounded'" (Letters, October 26), I attended the Oil and Gas Regulators drop-in at Aughton and was not impressed with the so-called Gold Standard regulation for the proposed fracking in our region.

None of the team of advisors had any industry experience and were under the misapprehension that nothing was likely to go wrong during the drilling/fracking process.

I have worked, in the offshore oil and gas industry worldwide for over 40 years and have seen many wellheads with oil or gas leaking from the surrounding seabed.

As has been proven both in the US and Australia, contamination of the water table (aquifers) is a well-documented occurence.

Would the likes of Tesco still be keen to buy produce from farms where there is potential contamination? I think not.

If the Aughton resident was to carry out some research, he or she would realise that the promise of jobs, cheaper fuel, etc. are no more than political hype.

Brian Mills, Halsall

Green bin charge will lead to more fly-tipping and more costs

ONCE again West Lancashire Council have shown utter contempt and have voted to introduce an annual charge of £30 for garden waste removal, and also to remove certain recycling sites across the borough.

I for one am a very keen gardener and I refuse to pay this £30 charge and will now be taking my waste to the nearest recycling site - that's if there are any left?

This council still went ahead with this charge even when 83% of us gave it an overwhelming thumbs down.

This charge will result in more fly-tipping across the borough which will lead to more costs for the council.

I will now expect the council to remove my green waste bin from my property, after all it is their property.

Should they fail to do so I will contact them and inform them I will be charging them a storage fee!

N. Jones, OAP, Burscough

So, what do we pay our council tax for?

I'VE no doubt that your inbox will be inundated with letters from readers who, like me, are incensed by the council's decision to charge for green waste collection.

Most, I'm sure, will centre around the obvious questions along the lines of 'what do we pay our council tax for?' and that this is flying in the face of green policies by actively discouraging recycling and encouraging people to use their cars to make trips to the dump.

However, I would ask can anyone tell me if, having paid £23 for a green bin which is now no longer required, the council are prepared to refund that cost and take the bin back?

I would also like to know how, when one operative can wheel two bins at a time, there is extra cost in the collection of a second bin?

This begs the question if, rather than saving money, the council are making money!

Alan Roberts, by email

Time for a re-think?

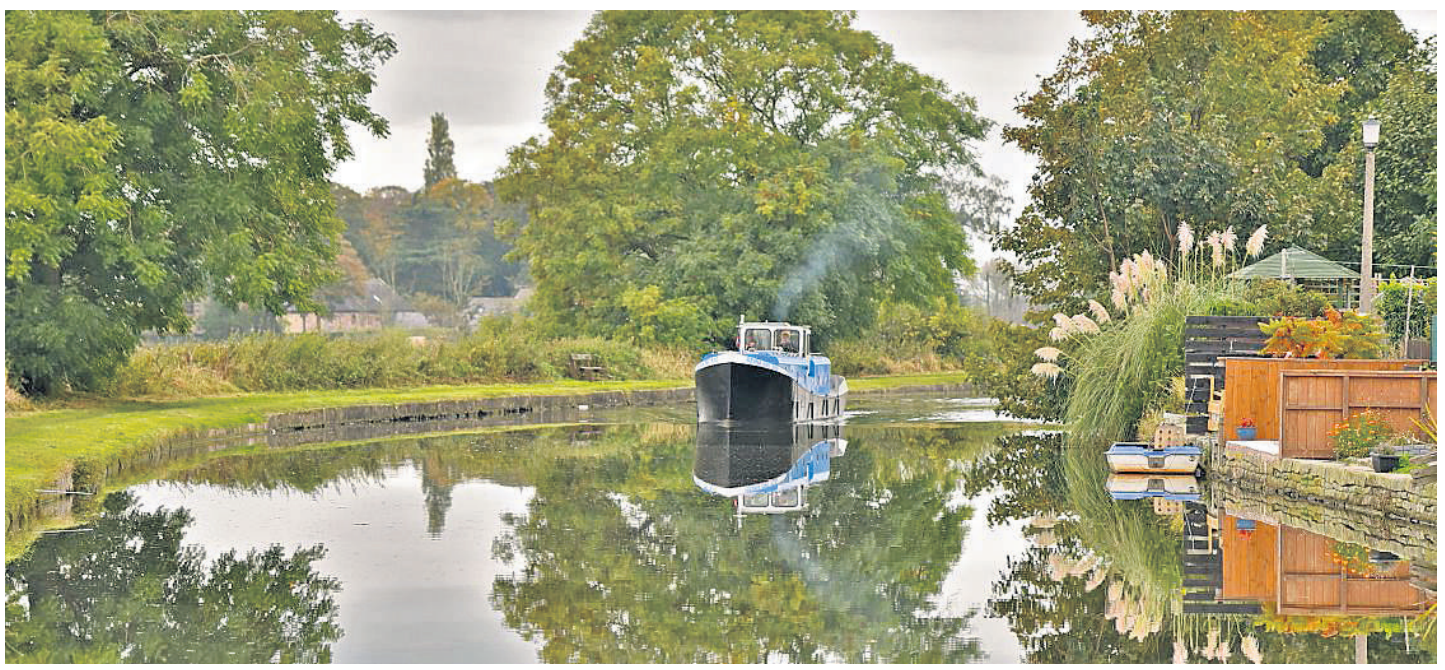
HAVING read in the Champion about the council's plan to charge tenants £30 for emptying the green compost bins next year, I would advise the people who decided this to think about the adverse repercussions.

Firstly, the bins will be returned and tenants will just dump any garden waste on the nearest open land. This, in turn, would need the council to tidy it up at your expense, which, on the estate I live on now - as it is already being neglected - would probably go unnoticed!

If the intention is to reduce the deficit in the council budget, I presume that all the councillors will accept a reduction in their allowances to show tenants that 'we are all in it together', to quote David Cameron!

Chris Grogan, Tanhouse, Skelmersdale

PICTURE of the week



Green is slowly turning to gold by the Leeds and Liverpool canal in this tranquil Autumnal scene at Lydiate. Picture by Martyn Snape.

Bar workers and licensees deserve an apology for unfair 'anti-social' claim

IN reply to the letter by Ian Davis (November 2) as one of the licensees that you have deemed anti-social I feel I should be allowed a say.

I am a mother, I go to work, I come home, I look after my children, I am a normal person who just happens to serve alcohol to people for a living.

How is that anti-social? I have worked in various pubs for 13 years. I had to go on a course and have a dbs check to become a personal licence holder so I'm well aware of all the laws and regulations surrounding alcohol and service.

We went to licensing and requested the 3am licence for just one week. We self-imposed our own conditions to our temporary event notice, like door staff every single night, no entry after 2am and we certainly didn't serve anybody we deemed drunk.

It was for one week. It is not the end of the world and we had no trouble that week. Various other bars had 3am service, therefore there was a substantial police presence.

As for contributing to costs, we already pay more than the average annual wage in business rates. Move with the times and stop being anti-social against us.

I'm more than happy to hold a meeting for everybody, including bar workers and students, instead of writing to the local paper to slate those of us who are just trying to earn a living to support our families.

Also, I think it's fair to ask for an apology on behalf of all my fellow bar workers and licensees for calling our good characters into question.

Ami Hynd, by email

Not all disabilities are visible

I HAVE some sympathy with the Ormskirk resident complaining about Blue Badge holders street parking on yellow lines whilst the designated bays in the hospital car park are empty to avoid charges (Letters, October 19).

However, I take exception to the sweeping statement about 'a constant stream of able-bodied occupants getting out of the cars and walking to the hospital.'

Not all disabilities are visible - if you don't walk with a limp or use a walking or mobility aid it doesn't mean you don't have a disability.

I am disabled with limited walking capacity but to look at me you may not think so. I have actually been asked when parking in a disabled bay to 'prove' my disability, which is rude, offensive and downright insulting!

I know the system is abused by some - unfortunately that is life.

Another Ormskirk resident

THE council's new £30 green waste charge is not legally binding – you don't have to pay it.

It is an optional charge. You don't have to pay it if you don't want to, but then you won't be given this service.

Other options include composting or mulching your green waste or bagging it and putting it into your regular bin.

Jim Burgess, by email

TaxPayers' Alliance launch free App to help keep a check on council finances

Report by **Henry James**

A PRESSURE group which campaigns for a low tax society has launched a free App, which allows taxpayers to access council finances on their mobile devices and see if their authority is providing value for money.

The TaxPayers' Alliance hope their new App, called YourTPA, will help promote transparency across local government.

Users can type in their postcode to bring up local data, allowing them to 'scrutinise and hold their individual authorities to account.'

Those who use the App will be able to look at councillors' allowances and see how much their local politicians claim in annual allowances.

People will also be able to see how much of their money is paid out in compensation claims against their council.

There will also be the facility to see how much council tax has gone up in real terms over the last 20 years and look at how many people employed by the council receive more than £100,000 a year.

Transparency

Users can also see how many artworks their council owns and how many are on display; and how much assets the council owns and what they are.

There is also the chance to find out how much office space the council provides to trade union representatives; how much goes towards funding trade union activities; and what is the true size of the council's liabilities which future generations will need to pay back.

John O'Connell, chief executive of the TaxPayers' Alliance, said: "Technology is playing an important role in making it easier for taxpayers to hold local politicians to account and promote transparency in local government. Anyone with a smartphone or tablet can now examine the performance of their own council and decide for themselves if councils are delivering value for taxpayers' hard-earned money.

"The TPA believes that transparency and public scrutiny are crucial for cutting out government waste and this free app provides every user with the opportunity to take part in that process."

The TaxPayers' Alliance have launched a free App to allow users to check councils' finances

Festive fun at gallery in countdown to Christmas

THE Chapel Gallery is hosting a weekend of sparkling contemporary crafts and festive entertainment to get everyone in the Christmas mood.

And makers of arts, crafts, vintage, or retro goods are being given a fantastic opportunity to sell their goods to people looking for that unique Christmas gift.

Activities at the West Lancs Council-run gallery in St Helens Road, Ormskirk are free to enter and the stalls will provide plenty of great ideas for special Christmas presents and treats.

The fun begins on Friday, November 25 to coincide with Ormskirk's Christmas lights switch-on, with a big Christmas Fair open from noon to 8pm.

Visitors will discover arts and craft stalls inside the Chapel Gallery and a bustling Christmas marquee in the town centre. People can browse the stalls for Christmas gifts while enjoying a festive atmosphere, free creative activities for families, live music, entertainment and a Christmas Grotto in Ormskirk town centre.

The family-focused evening event, from 6 to 8pm, will include a face painter, free activities, live entertainment and artisan foods, including a complementary glass of warm mulled wine for visitors, while stocks last.

The Christmas theme continues on Saturday, November 26 with the monthly Makers' Market between 10am and 4pm. A wide selection of crafts will be on offer, demos will take place throughout the day, and there's free entertainment and creative activities.

Meanwhile visitors to the town centre will find the famous Cotton Town Hot Club vintage DJs, with their dancers.

The weekend is rounded off with a Vintage and Handmade Fair on Sunday, November 27 from 10am to 4pm with a fabulous array of wares and a great selection of food and drink, plus demonstrations and free craft activities for the whole family.

Councillor Yvonne Gagen, West lancs Council's portfolio holder for leisure, said: "With Christmas shopping season just around the corner shoppers and traders should make sure they don't miss these fantastic fairs. They will be great fun for all the family and an ideal opportunity to pick up a great Christmas gift."

For more information about the Chapel Gallery, visit westlancs.gov.uk/chapelgallery.

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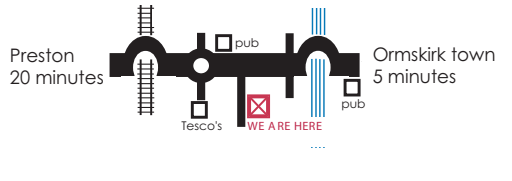

Ormskirk in UK's top 10 most popular market towns to live in

ORMSKIRK has been listed as one of the 10 most popular market towns in the UK to live in - but it comes at a price!

According to figures released by the Office for National Statistics, the average house price in the UK is £218,964.

However, figures from Lloyds Bank show that homeowners are paying between £90,000 and £690,000 more to live in those top 10 most popular market towns.

Ormskirk, which comes in 10th on the list, has an average house price of £244,075.

The average price across Lancashire as a whole is £153,446 - a difference of more than £90,600 or almost 60%.

The study by the bank also revealed that the average price of a home in a market town works out around 25% more than the national average, which is almost eight times the average wage of a UK worker.

...but house prices are £90,000 higher than Lancashire average

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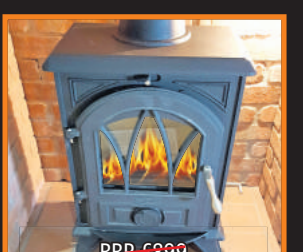
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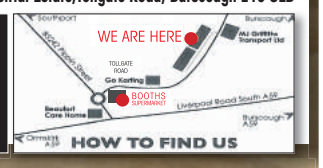

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West Lancs teachers to be clued up on child sexual exploitation

Report by **Henry James**

WEST LANCASHIRE teachers are to get clued up on child sexual exploitation after police officers secured funding.

The money was given to the Deter Team, which specialises on child sexual exploitation.

This follows on from the Respect Me Too workshops that were run in several schools across the area last year aimed at Year 7 pupils focussing on how youngsters may be groomed.

Three, one-day training programmes for staff from nine West Lancashire schools will be hosted at Skelmersdale Police Station by Freedom Personal Safety, a social enterprise that specialises in delivering personal safety and healthy relationship workshops in schools and the wider community. The sessions will focus on: healthy/unhealthy relationships; sexting; impact of pornography (inappropriate pictures/selfies); Grooming/Child Sexual Exploitation - spotting the signs; Safeguarding – the referral processes; and the law and legal implications of the above issues

These sessions will provide staff with an in-depth knowledge of the issues covered and give them the resources and techniques to explore these topics in school with students. Each teacher attending the course will be asked to take their knowledge back and carry out three delivery sessions over the academic year, two of which must be direct delivery to students and one can be a training session to colleagues.

Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner Clive Grunshaw

These sessions are part of a wider plan to improve and build upon joined up working between police and schools to ensure that between them, they are doing all they can to protect their children.

It is the hope that these sessions will mean that teachers will have more confidence in spotting signs of CSE, more of an understanding of how to deal with it if they do spot a problem, and to provide more resources for the teachers to support them in what is crucial role in keeping children safe.

Sessions

The sessions started at the beginning of the national CSE awareness week on November 8 and will run until the 14th of the month.

Funding to run the sessions, of £2,000 was secured by officers through the Community Safety Funding scheme run by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

DC Liberty Wadsworth of the Deter Team, Skelmersdale Police, said: "This really is an excellent opportunity for us to work closely with schools. We'll equip the teachers with the information they need to know about spotting the signs of CSE and how they can refer any concerns onto us or one of the other agencies in Lancashire."

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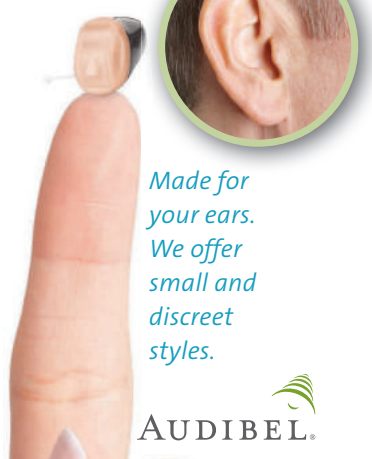

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Village defibrillator fund

MEMBERS of the Hilldale Community Association are hoping to raise £1,000 to fund a defibrillator for Hilldale Village Hall - the first in the village.

The group's first fundraising event will be a musical event at Parbold Village Hall on Saturday, December 17 featuring The Last Resort.

This starts at 7.30pm, tickets are priced £10 and you can take your own drinks and light refreshments.To buy tickets email Hilldale@btconnect.com or text 07957135961.

Parish councils remember...

HASKAYNE and Lydiate Parish Councils will be holding a Service of Remembrance at the war memorial at Our Lady's Church, Liverpool Road, Lydiate on Friday, November 11.

Wreaths will be laid by the chairman of Downholland Parish Council and the chairman of Lydiate Parish Council.

Local school children will be attending and all residents are invited to join the service at 10.45am for the wreath-laying at 11am.

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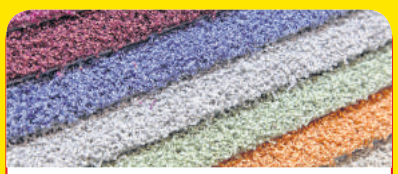

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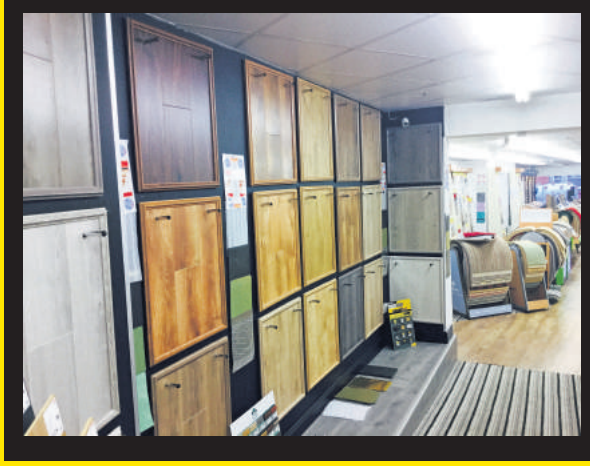

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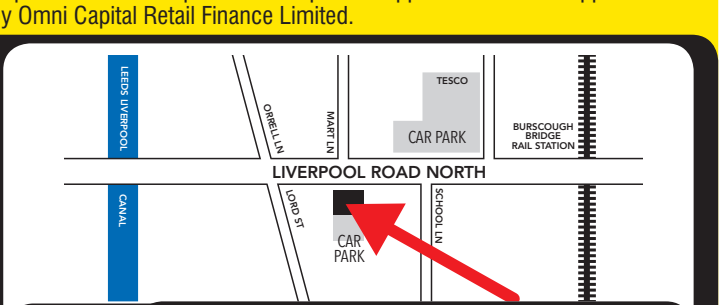

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Care trust offers sexual health clinics for under-25s across borough

YOUNG people in West Lancashire can now access sexual health services at various locations across the borough.

The clinics, run by Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust's Contraception and Sexual Health (CaSH) service, in partnership with Brook, the young people's charity, are open to people up to the age of 25.

Health experts are at hand to provide comprehensive contraceptive services and testing, as well as treatment for sexually transmitted infections including HIV, in a single appointment.

CaSH is running the following clinics in the area:

Skelmersdale Walk-in-Centre in the Concourse on Saturdays from 11.30am to 2.30pm (walk-in clinic).

Birleywood Health Centre, Skelmersdale on Wednesdays from 1.30 to 4.30pm; and Thursdays from 1.30 to 3.30pm (appointments only).

Hants Lane Clinic, Hants Lane, Ormskirk on Tuesdays from 5.30 to 7.30pm (appointments and walk-in); and Thursdays from 5.30 to 7.30pm (appointments only).

Sue Capstick, service line manager for sexual health at Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust

Further clinics are to be announced soon.

Sue Capstick, service line manager for sexual health at Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Young people under the age of 25 in West Lancashire can now access our specialist services in Ormskirk and Skelmersdale.

"We're delighted to be able to provide this service which means young people can access excellent, high-quality sexual health care. Young people in West Lancashire can now be confident that they are able to access appropriate care and make choices that are right for them."

Earlier this year, the trust's CaSH service was awarded the Lancashire LGBT Quality Mark, a quality assurance programme for service providers that assists in measuring how well the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender service users, volunteers and staff are met.

To contact your local CaSH team, book an appointment or find out about 'drop-ins,' call 01772 401140.

There are clinics in various locations and different session times across Lancashire. To find out more about services in your area, visit www.lancashire-care.nhs.uk/cash-lancashire.

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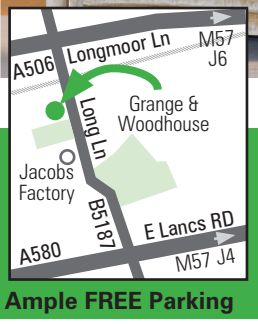

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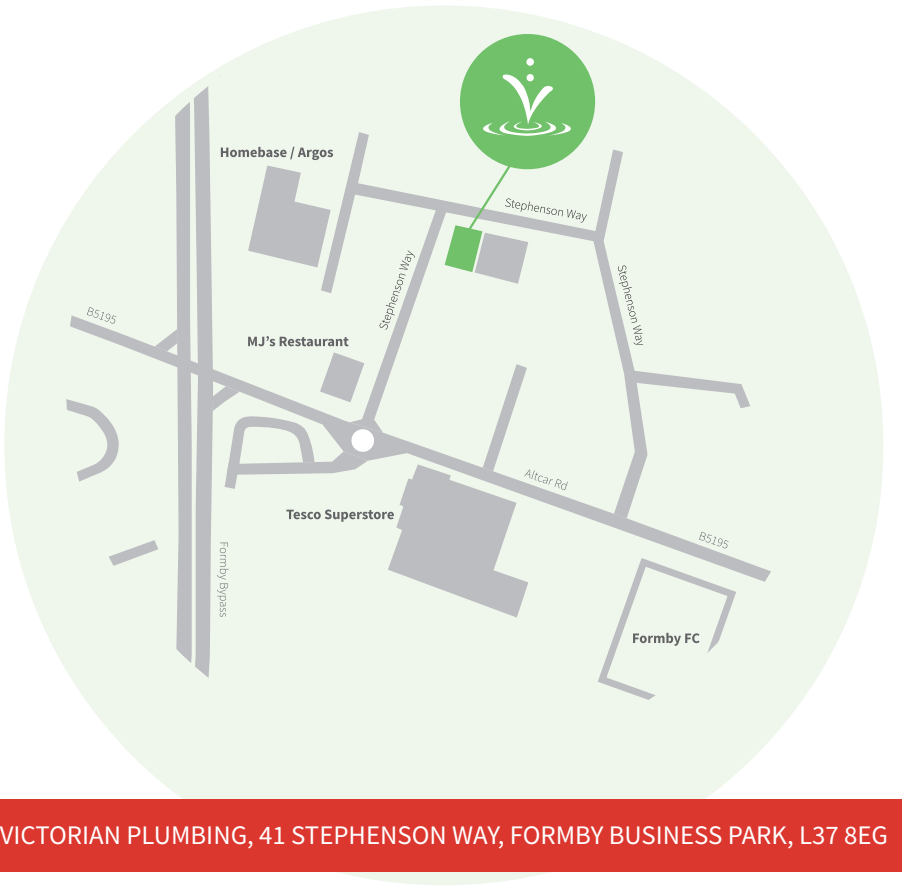

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Chance to nominate county's inspirational youngsters for award

IF you know of an inspiring child or young person who deserves recognition now is the time to nominate them for a special award organised by Lancashire County Council.

Nominations for the authority's PROUD awards close on Wednesday, November 30.

These aim to recognise the successes and contributions made by children and young people who are currently being looked after, or have previously been looked after.

Achievements in their own lives and helping others will be recognised by the awards and young people can be nominated individually or in groups in the following five award categories:

•Positive choices and achievements.

•Responding to the needs of others.

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson

•Outstanding service to the community.

•Unique talent.

•Danny Collins inspiration award.

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, Lancashire's cabinet member for children, young people and schools, said: "We know that many children and young people have overcome, and will continue to overcome, significant difficulties in their lives.

"If you know someone amazing like this who you think deserves special recognition, this is your chance to reward that and to nominate them for an award.

"Whatever the achievement - whether it's caring for someone, helping out in the community, overcoming personal hardship, volunteering or showing outstanding spirit or sporting or artistic talent - please make sure you tell us about it."

Everyone nominated will receive a congratulatory letter and a certificate of recognition.

Historian's talk at heritage group meeting

THE next monthly meeting of the Lathom and Burscough Military Heritage Society will be held on Monday, November 14 at the Blue Mallard on Burscough Wharf when military historian Richard Houghton will be guest speaker.

As well as talking about the role of the Stanley Club Hospital in Burscough during the First World War, Mr Houghton will discuss the Battle of the Somme, focussing particularly on the last action of the historic engagement known as the 'Battle of the Ancre'.

The event will start at 7.30pm and entry costs a £2 donation to the group.

For more information, ring Colin on 07931 356204.

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Initiative to raise awareness of child sex exploitation

A WEEK-long initiative set up to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation (CSE) has been launched in Lancashire.

Partners from local councils, trading standards, schools, leisure centres, hotels, the NHS, children's charities and other agencies are working in conjunction with officers to focus on prevention, awareness, enforcement and engagement with communities across the county in the project, which will run until Sunday, November 13.

CSE is child abuse. It is complex and can manifest itself in different ways but essentially it involves children and young people being coerced into performing sexual acts on their abuser or others. Often this may be in return for some kind of 'reward' – for example, accommodation, drugs or other gifts, but many are forced into sex out of fear.

Another aspect of this abuse is that many children and young people do not see themselves as victims and wrongly believe themselves to be in relationships with their abusers.

CSE can also occur without physical contact, for example when children are groomed, post sexual images of themselves online or are tempted by someone online to meet in the real world.

These types of crimes are increasing nationally as well as in Lancashire. Between April 2015 and March 2016, Lancashire Constabulary received 1,754 child sexual exploitation referrals and 630 crimes related to CSE were recorded.

The county's police and crime commissioner, Clive Grunshaw, said: "Keeping our young people safe from harm is a key priority for everyone in Lancashire.

"The more that young people know about CSE, then the more likely they are able to protect themselves and their friends from potentially predatory behaviour."

Offenders can be male or female, of any ethnicity and can operate alone or as part of a group or gang. They are often very manipulative and plausible people and can come from all sections of society. The thing they have in common is that they all prey on the vulnerable.

If you are concerned about a young person you know, call Lancashire Constabulary on 101 or visit lancashire.police.uk/cse for more information.

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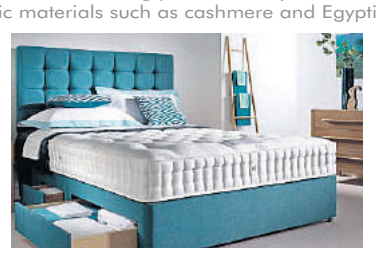
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County Hall goes purple to shed light on cancer campaign

Report by **Henry James**

LANCASHIRE County Council is once again showing its support for a national campaign to raise awareness of pancreatic cancer by lighting up the historic County Hall in Preston in purple this month.

The 'Turn it Purple' campaign, run by charity Pancreatic Cancer Action, calls for organisations and people to highlight the fifth deadliest cancer in the UK by embracing purple – the symbolic colour for pancreatic cancer.

Illuminating buildings and other local landmarks, and encouraging people to wear something purple are some of the ways people can support the campaign to help generate discussion and awareness of pancreatic cancer and its symptoms.

Every year almost 9,000 men and women will be newly diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Due to late diagnosis, people could be faced with a shockingly low chance of survival and an average life expectancy of just three to six months.

This is the third year that the authority has supported the campaign.

Leader of the council, County Councillor Jennifer Mein, said: "We're pleased to be taking part in this important national campaign once again. It's crucial to raise awareness of pancreatic cancer and encourage people to seek medical advice if they're not well.

"Everyone in Lancashire will know someone who has been affected by cancer in some way. Identifying the disease early means you're much more likely to treat it successfully."

Between 2006 and 2015 more than 1,500 Lancashire residents died from pancreatic cancer, an average of 159 deaths per year.

Dr Sakthi Karunanithi, the county council's director of public health, said: "Unfortunately, survival rates for pancreatic cancer are relatively poor. If the cancer has not spread outside of the pancreas and surgery is possible, between seven and 25 out of 100 people (7 to 25%) will survive for five years or more.

"Surgery is the most effective treatment for early stage pancreatic cancers and generally results in longer survival than where surgery is not possible.

County Hall is being lit purple to raise awareness of pancreatic cancer

Treatment options will depend on whether it is possible to remove the pancreatic cancer by surgery, potentially utilising chemotherapy as well.

"However, early diagnosis is crucial and anything we can do to improve the chances of people being diagnosed earlier, such as raising awareness through the Turn it Purple campaign, is very important.

"Symptoms of pancreatic cancer can include stomach or back pain, jaundice, indigestion and unexplained weight loss. However, it's important to remember that these symptoms can be caused by many different health conditions and are not usually the result of cancer.

"If you are concerned or develop symptoms that can't be explained, you should contact your GP.

"Giving up smoking and making sure we don't become obese can certainly reduce the risk of developing pancreatic cancer."

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Professor creates special musical Somme tribute

A PROFESSOR from Edge Hill University in Ormskirk has created orchestral work to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme.

Stephen Davismoon, who is the university's head of Performing Arts, was commissioned by the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra to create work that focuses on the tragic history of the Salford Pals (Lancashire Fusiliers) in the lead up to the 'great advance' at the Battle of the Somme.

Professor Davismoon, said: "The catastrophic human tragedy that unfolded in the opening hours of July 1, 1916 inspired me to take on this project. To create an aural memorial to all of the lives that were irreparably torn apart on that fateful morning, my lens for the work was the story of the Pals." It will air on BBC Radio 3 at 11.30pm on Remembrance Sunday (November 13).

Professor Stephen Davismoon

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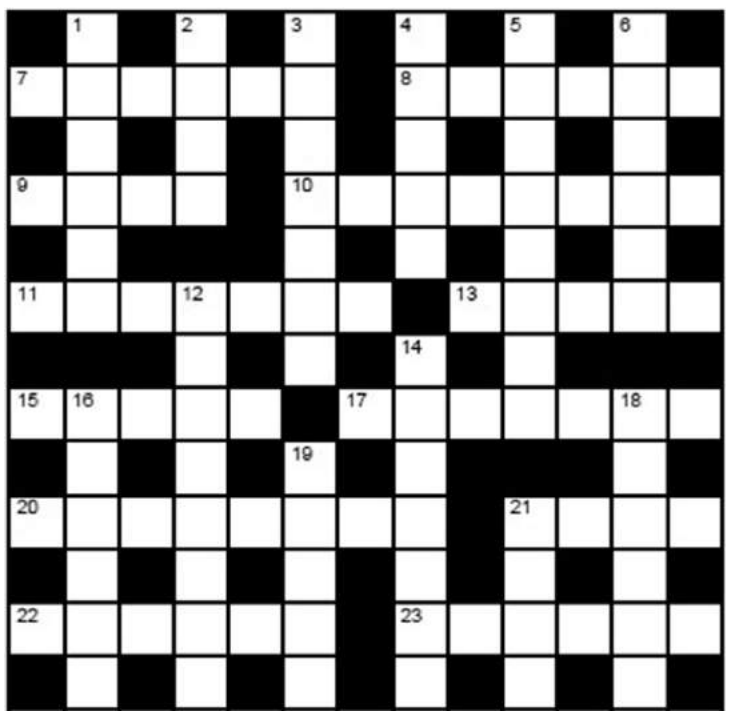

ACROSS

7 Confer holy orders on (6)
8 Cause or explanation (6)
9 Shabby as a result of much use (4)
10 The ridge piece of a roof (8)
11 Capable of being drawn out or stretched (7)
13 Large round fruit of the gourd family with pulpy flesh (5)
15 Extreme physical or mental suffering (5)
17 Omission of a sound or syllable when speaking (7)
20 An outlet for excess water (8)
21 Blemish, imperfection (4)
22 Reliable (6)
23 Puzzle (6)

DOWN

1 Spiral track cut in a vinyl disc (6)
2 Small mountain lake (4)
3 Having a sustained period of success or good luck (2,1,4)
4 Salivate (5)
5 Female restaurant or bar worker (8)
6 Spanish dance in triple time (6)
12 Loose, sleeveless dress typically with wide neckline and thin shoulder straps (8)
14 Treatment you might have at the hairdresser's (4-3)
16 Rule (6)
18 Place at which divine advice or prophecy was sought (6)
19 County in North East Wales (5)
21 Grow faint (4)

Last week's solutions:

Across: 7 Privatisation. 8 Departed. 9 Neat. 10 Gruyere. 12 Acrid. 14 Scary. 16 Proceed. 19 Gull. 20 Astonish. 22 Psychological.

Down: 1 True. 2 Aviary. 3 Stature. 4 Aside. 5 Ethnic. 6 Bona fide. 11 Recourse. 13 Oration. 15 Relict. 17 Candid. 18 Capon. 21 Soak.

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County council event to encourage people to consider adoption

LANCASHIRE County Council is once again encouraging people to consider 'growing' their families through adoption by staging a special event outlining the process involved.

The information evening will be held at County Hall in Prestion on Wednesday, November 16, from 6 to 7.30pm and there's no need to book, you can just turn up.

The council is focussing on two different types of adoption so that more babies and young children can go to live with their new permanent families quicker.

Concurrent Placements place babies and young children, aged up to two, with foster carers who may go on to give them a permanent home; while the Fostering-for-Adoption scheme is for children where there is no realistic prospect of a return to their birth family.

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, Lancashire's cabinet member for children, young people and schools, said: "More children in Lancashire are benefiting from an earlier start in life with their adoptive families thanks to these programmes.

"Sometimes babies come into our care at birth or soon after, and they're looked after by foster carers, while we work with their parents to see if they can go home.

"If this isn't possible, the court process can take many months and after that the baby usually has to move again, to their adoptive parents."

Concurrent Placements place a baby or child straight away with their prospective adopters, who are also approved as foster carers, while the birth family is assessed and the court makes a decision.

Foster-for-Adoption carers are approved as temporary foster carers, but are prepared to adopt the child - if it is eventually decided that they can't return to their birth family.

These Fostering-for-Adoption arrangements can give children continuous care in the home that they may settle in permanently, rather than spending months with other foster carers first.

They also give the added benefit of allowing them to bond with their new family at an earlier age.

Fostering-for-Adoption has been encouraged by the government over the last two years, across the country, as part of reforms to speed up the adoption process.

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson

...and more foster carers sought as well

THE county council is also stepping up its drive to recruit foster carers by holding an information evening.

The authority is seeking people to provide homes for the 1,600 children in its care while they can't live with their families.

Anyone interested is invited to go along to the information evening at County Hall in Pitt Street, Preston, on Tuesday, November 15 to find out more from the council's experienced social workers and current foster carers.

There's no need to book but anyone planning to attend is asked to arrive early to avoid disappointment. There will be an opportunity to meet current carers and hear about the rewards and the challenges of being a foster carer.

Around 20 children come through the county council's social work teams every week, from newborn babies to teenagers. They are looking for people who can foster all ages of children, particularly brothers and sisters who need to stay together, and teenagers.

A package of support is available 24/7 to help foster carers in their role, including local support groups, their own social worker, a dedicated helpline and flexible training.

Foster carers who are transferring from other agencies can be fast-tracked through the approval process and county council foster carers get first priority for placements ahead of agency carers.

A spokesperson for the county council said; "If you are over 21, have a spare room available and want to make a difference to a local child's life, why not be a foster carer for your local authority?"

If you're unable to attend on the night but are interested in becoming a foster carer, call the fostering recruitment team on 0300 123 6723 or visit the website at www.lancashire.gov.uk/fostering.

College open evening

WEST Lancashire College is holding an Open Evening on Tuesday, November 15 from 4.30 to 7pm at the Skemersdale Campus in College Way.

There will be a chance to meet the tutors, get professional careers advice and guidance from the college's Matrix Accredited Student Services team, apply for live apprenticeship vacancies, view classroom displays and hear from learners currently on study programmes with the college.

A spokesperson for the college said: "With a £42.8m Skelmersdale campus and plans for a new technology centre due to open in 2017, the college is looking better than ever with a wide range of courses suited to everyone.

"We offer courses for school leavers, adult learners, 16 to 18-year-olds not in employment or in college and for those in employment, who would like to progress or change career path, plus a range of foundation degrees.

"Open evenings are an opportunity to see how our fantastic facilities provide learners with real-life work experience to support and enhance their employment prospects."

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Holly aims to make a splash in top event

Young diver is first from North West to contest national championships

A TALENTED youngster from West Lancashire will be aiming to make a splash at a national diving competition next month.

Ten-year-old Holly Curran *(pictured)*, will represent St John's Roman Catholic Primary School in Burscough at the English Schools' National Diving Championships to be held at the London Aquatics Centre in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park over the weekend of Saturday and Sunday, December 10 and 11.

Holly, who is a member of Burscough Diving Club, only took up the sport last year after taking part in talent testing carried out by the club.

Since then she has developed quickly under the guidance of head coach, Carlos Ferra and has competed in national events, as well as receiving coaching at a specialist training programme in Leeds, where she met Olympic gold medallists, Jack Laugher and Chris Mears.

She is the first representative from a primary school in the North West to take part in the English Schools' National Diving Championships since its inception in 1949.

Holly won her place at the prestigious event by excelling at the North West trials, beating her nearest competitor by more than 40 points.

She is now learning new dives and increasing the degree of difficulty, which she hopes will help her clinch success at the championships.

St John's head teacher, Elizabeth Davey, said: "We are so proud of Holly at the school. Her commitment and dedication to her sport and also her contribution within school is exemplary. All the staff, pupils and governors wish her all the best."

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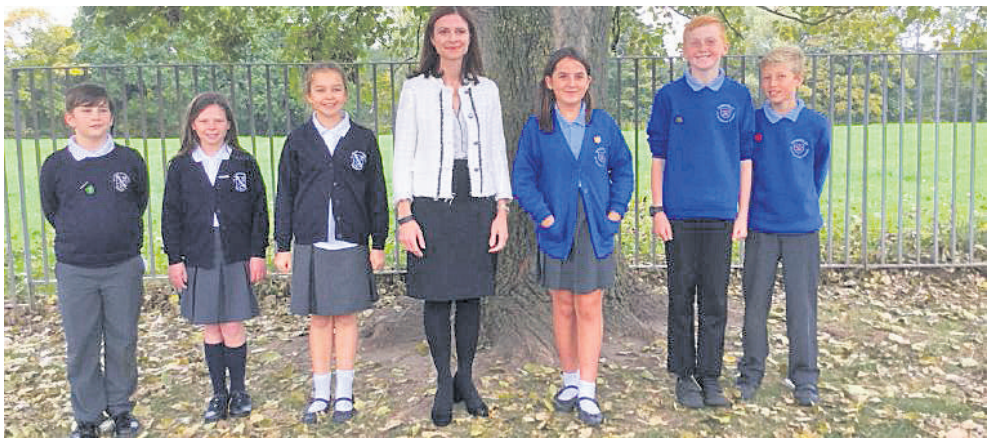

South Ribble MP Seema Kennedy with the pupils who spoke in the debate

MP chairs as primary pupils get their teeth into junk food debate

WHEN pupils from two neighbouring West Lancs primary schools got their teeth into a debate about junk food they had a special guest to oversee proceedings.

South Ribble MP Seema Kennedy visited Mawdesley St Peter's CE Primary to chair the debate about a motion proposing that junk food should be banned for children.

Year 6 pupils from St Peter's proposed the motion, while youngsters from St Peter and Paul's Catholic Primary opposed.

Year 6 teacher at St Peter's, Heidi Jackson, said: "Both schools had put a great deal of preparation into their speeches and the culmination was the experience of a live debate.

"The main point that our pupils made was that junk food causes obesity, heart disease and diabetes.

"In response the opposition made the point that if junk food outlets were closed then people would be unemployed

"Our pupils then countered that the fast food industry could be replaced by healthy eating, quick food businesses instead.

"After the debate the children asked Seema Kennedy for feedback on how they could improve their debating skills.

"The proposition speakers were successful in convincing the house to ban junk food, although both sides put forward great arguments and vital points were made on both sides.

"The pupils are now looking forward to visiting Seema Kennedy in her offices when they will travel to the Houses of Parliament in London later this month."

Seema Kennedy commented: "The children had obviously prepared very hard. Their arguments were well-presented and well-crafted and they spoke very clearly and without hesitation."

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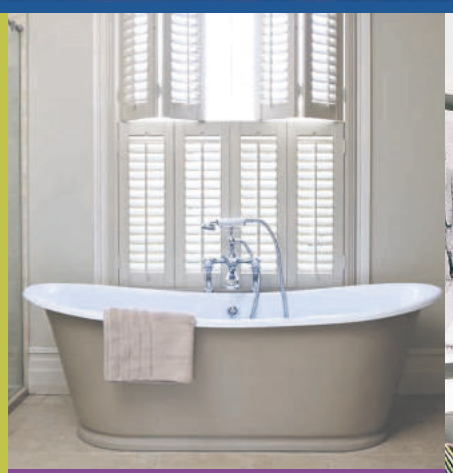

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Talented artists could have work showcased in London gallery

TALENTED artists in West Lancs are being urged to enter a competition to win £15,000.

Painters could take home a gold medal in this year's national Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize as well as seeing their work hung in London's world-famous Mall Galleries in March as well as the prize money if they win the 12th annual competition, which seeks out artwork which 'captures the real world.'

The Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize is one of the most prestigious awards for artists in the UK, offering total prize money of £30,000, including a first prize of £15,000, second prize of £4,000 alongside the newly introduced People's Prize worth £2,000.

Young artists aged 25 or under can compete for the Young Artist Award of £4,000. This is a coveted prize that aims to promote support fresh new talent.

The competition is open to any artist resident in the UK painting or drawing works of representational or figurative art and over 18-years-old. Both amateur artists and professionals can submit up to four pieces of work.

Bernadett Timko, who won the last Young Artist category with her work, Studio 7

For the third year running, the competition is also offering the Brian Botting Prize of £5,000 which will be awarded to an artist aged 30 or under for an outstanding representation of the human figure.

Leading artist Ken Howard OBE, who chairs the judges, said: "The Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize celebrates the very best of British representational art and acts as a show case to the rest of the world. It's all about the way in which our artists see the real world and capture it."

Around 100 entries will be selected for display in London's famous Mall Galleries.

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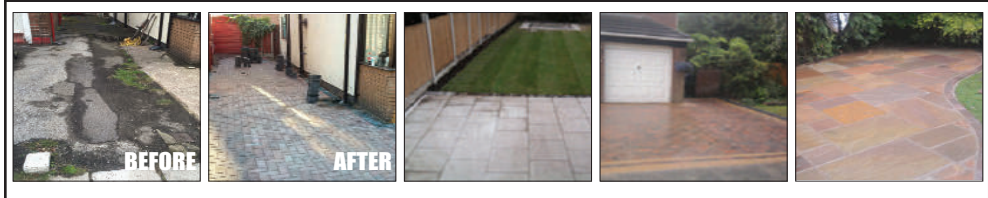

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Historian creates map of soldier's graves in Halsall

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A HISTORIAN has created a map of the graves and memorials of soldiers from Halsall who died during the First and Second World Wars which can be used to pay tribute to the fallen on Remembrance Sunday (November, 13).

War historian Stephen Henders has researched the graves at St Cuthbert's Church in Halsall and has produced a map of the graveyard and tombstones *(right)*, indicating all of the soldiers' graves and memorials.

A large version of this map will be on display in the porch of the church and smaller versions will be handed out to those who attend the Remembrance Sunday service at the church, which they can use to locate the graves afterwards and pay their respects at. These will be easily identifiable as they will all be decorated with poppy-themed tributes.

Stephen Henders said: "It is particularly poignant this year because 45 local men went to France in 1914 and the first deaths were recorded in 1916, 100 years ago after the battles of the Somme and Paschendale.

"Although the Commonwealth War Graves Commission only record five graves in Halsall, there are eleven others bearing inscriptions to the fallen in France and Flanders. It was pointed out to me by a senior parishioner, that often no remains were found and that the loved one was sometimes not recorded on the memorials on the battlefields.

"This was so for Edward Townsend from Haskayne who died near Cambrai in 1917.

"His family like many other families wanted their son's sacrifice to be recorded on family monuments. A headstone and plot record the death, a private place to record their grief and memory.

"The graves will be identified by tributes on Remembrance Sunday."

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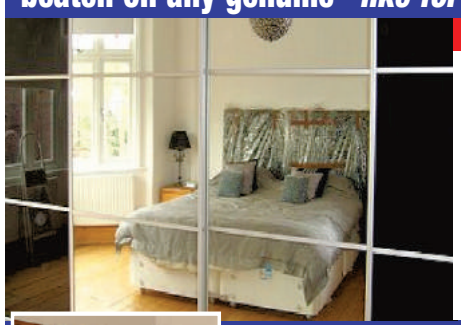
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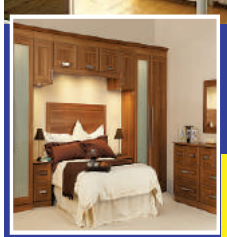
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Neither shaken nor stirred - why Sir Roger Moore loved playing Bond for laughs

Ahead of his show at Southport Theatre the much-loved actor spoke to Champion reporter Henry James about why the films are so popular

SIR Roger Moore has played the role of James Bond more times than any other actor but he never uttered the phrase "shaken not stirred" to order a Martini cocktail in any of the 007 films he appeared in.

The actor spoke to the Champion from his home in Monaco to publicise his show – An Evening with Sir Roger Moore - which is coming to Southport Theatre on Tuesday, November 22.

The 89-year-old, who has been to Southport once before to visit in-laws for a couple of days in 1947, became famous around the world for his role in The Saint, and appeared in seven Bond films taking up the role of Bond after Sean Connery and George Lazenby.

He said: "Guy Hamilton who directed the first Bond film that I appeared in, which was Live and Let Die, wanted to make sure that there were things that Sean Connery did that I shouldn't do or say. So I never said, 'shaken not stirred.'

"It always struck me as odd in the films how James Bond, who is a spy and should be a faceless person, is known all around the world wherever he travels. They also know what he drinks."

Sir Roger played the role differently to Connery and became famous for raising a knowing eyebrow to the audience during the films.

Sir Roger Moore

He also injected more humour into the part. He said: "I saw a lot of humour in the films.

"First, the fact that I was playing the role had to be funny for a start and quite honestly I never thought he was a real spy. Today Daniel Craig is a spy and I believe him."

The James Bond film series is one of the most successful movie franchises in history.

Sir Roger tried to put his finger on why the films are so popular saying: "Bond films always give the audience what they expect. They know what they are going to get before they go to watch a Bond film.

"They are going to get attractive looking women, explosives, fast cars and gadgets, extraordinary stunts and travel.

"The films will be in different places and different backgrounds all the time."

The actor played the part of Bond for the last time in A View to A Kill in 1985 at the age of 58.

He said: "I loved being in the films right from the beginning. It was a laugh. We had wonderful crews and a wonderful producer in Cubby Broccoli.

"I also got to travel to some wonderful places. My favourite location was Cala di Volpe in Sardinia in the Spy Who Loved Me.

"Out of all the films I appeared in that was my favourite as some terrific locations were used to film it.

"It also has a good storyline and I loved Richard Kiel as Jaws and the director Lewis Gilbert was good."

While he was a great success as Bond, Sir Roger was given a knighthood for his work as a goodwill ambassador for Unicef, the United Nations Children's Fund and he added: "Unicef is working for the basic needs of children throughout the world all the time.

"It took over my life for a long time."

Claire Roberts to give a solo performance at society's Autumn concert

THE choir and orchestra of Ormskirk Music Society are giving their Autumn concert at 7.30pm on Saturday, November 19 at Ormskirk School.

The programme will feature Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture, Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, and Handel's Zadok the Priest.

There will also be a special performance of Dvorak's Romance for solo violin and orchestra.

The soloist will be the orchestra's leader, Claire Roberts. Claire is a violinist and composer originally from South West Wales.

She graduated from Oxford University with a BA in music, and continued her studies as a violinist at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Now working on a composition research degree, Claire continues to perform in chamber and orchestral groups across the North West as well as giving solo performances, be it classical or on electric violin.

Recent performances include the Lancashire Tourism Awards at Blackburn Cathedral and the Cantiere del'arte festival in Tuscany.

Tickets are available in advance from Clare Williams (01925 221301 or clarebhamilton@hotmail.com) or on the door. For more information, visit ormskirk-musicsociety.org.uk or follow on Twitter @ormskirk_music

Claire Roberts

Club's next play is alternative to usual festive fare

Preview by **Ron Ellis**

SOUTHPORT Dramatic Club's next production is from the writer of Calendar Girls (Tim Firth) and is called The Flint Street Nativity.

It tells of the chaos resulting at Flint Street Junior School when Miss Horrocks' class of seven-year-olds put on a nativity play for an audience of their Mums and Dads and social workers. A picture from rehearsals is shown.

What could possibly go wrong at such an event? Well, you name it. Gabriel wants to play Mary; the Star has delusions of grandeur; Herod won't stop waving; the Stick Insect escapes and the subversive Innkeeper wants to liven up the script with a few expressions not normally heard at such events.

There is slapstick action and catchy tunes with funny lyrics combined with pathos as we are taken right through the rehearsals, with the inevitable mishaps and misunderstandings, until the final performance which culminates in calamity.

Furthermore, to add to the fun, all the children's parts in this comedy are played by adults, who later are transformed into parents at the post-show gathering.

Directed by Adrian Roberts and Steve Pritchard, this is the perfect alternative to the usual Christmas fare.

The show will be at the Little Theatre from November 18 to November 26.

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Southport Dramatic Club

The Flint Street Nativity

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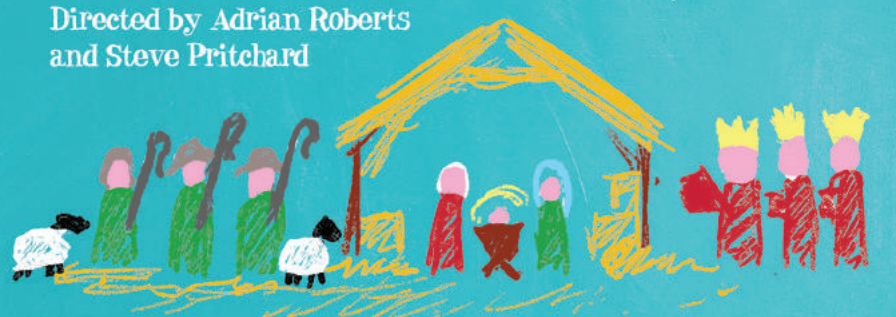

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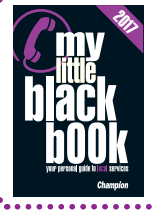

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SAT 12th
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SAT 19th
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MON 21st
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TUE 22nd
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FRI 25th
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SAT 26th
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SAT 21st
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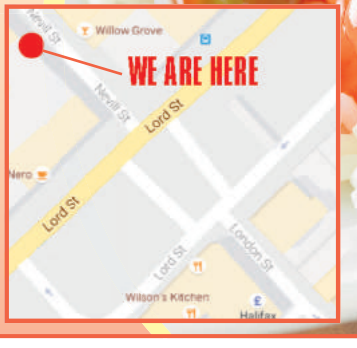

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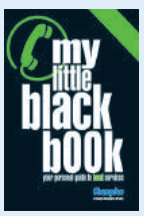

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Due to an error in last week's Champion, please see below for the correct dates for Ormskirk Theatre Company's 'Remember' production

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APOLLO HONEYBEAR Bike with stablisers, 9'' frame, pink and yellow, suit 4-5 year old £10 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

MOUNTAIN BIKE £50 01704 214017

BOYS BIKE Blue boys bike with stabilisers. Ideal for starting off. All in working order, very good condition. £10.00 07709321569/01704870914

MOUNTAIN BIKE Gents with black frame.15 Shimano gears. Good tyres and brakes. Rides well. Good condition. £45 Ainsdale 01704560627

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CLOTHING

BOYS CLOTHES Newborn to 12 months. 2 Bundles. From a smoke and pet free home. £20. 07792 400418

BLACK DRESS Emma Somerset black beaded dress size 14 excellent condition bargain £45 07944169465

CLOTHING

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CASHMERE PULLOVER. Ladies size 12. Grey cableknit. M&S Autograph. Long sleeves. Polo-neck. 100% cashmere. Unused. Some faint marks [washable] £12. Rufford. 01704 821604.

LEATHER BOOTS Brand new in box size 6 EEE colour brown £10 01695 420950

LADIES DARK grey short length Principles jacket with fur lined collar size 16 excellent condition may deliver £10 ono 01515263851

LADIES PER UNA dress ideal for special occasion deep pink black white beige pattern worn once size 16 may deliver £15 ono 01515263851

LADIES BEIGE short length Next jacket size 12 may deliver £9 ono 01515263851

LADIES DRESS AND JACKET Fully beaded and black in colour, edge to edge Jacket has long sleeves which is size 14, the dress is a size 16, only worn once, ideal for special occasion, can email photograph. £20 07434841029

LADIES JACKET Brand new Marks and Spencer's ladies short jacket still has labels on. Black and white, size 14. Very smart looking and a bargain. Also more jackets if needed £25 07434841029

GENTS SHIRTS Six shirts, size 15 1/2 collar, all good makes, two with long sleeves. Like new and a bargain at £20 07434841029

GENTS SUIT Brand new gents suit which still has labels on bought from Next, 36 inch waist, regular leg, jacket 40 regular, charcoal grey in colour, genuine reason for sale £59 07434841029

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MEN'S GREY duffle coat size medium usual togged fastenings/2 front pockets/hood. Quilted padded inner. Unworn £20 07855222552/07821417560

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CLOTHING

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BLACK SUEDE BOOTS knee high with 2inch heels can be folded over to make calve high (hardly worn) £10 07821417560/07855222552

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COMPUTING

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RJ45 CONNECTORS Pack of 40+ £10 07858 462998

ASUS NOTEBOOK Asus 10 inch Touch Screen. Windows 10 64 bit OS. 500 gig HD. 4 gig RAM. 1 gig Processor. Just over a year old and genuine reason for sale. £120 01704 546978

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COMPUTER CHAIR Black adjustable height and back and swivels with wheels. Hardly used collection Southport. £20 07482010176

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HOME COMPUTER Recently serviced with microsoft office. Collection Southport £60 07482010176

DIY

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HOME ENTERTAINMENT

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HOUSE AND HOME

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NAO ORNAMENT Girl with hat 9 inches tall vgc £15 01695 420950

NAO ORNAMENT Girl with doll 9 inches tall vgc £15 01695 420950

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HOUSE AND HOME

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BREAKFAST STOOLS 2 Chrome and black adjustable Stools. Very good condition £20 ono 07761246655

BED CHAIR Ikea fold out bed chair. Cream cover. Chair/ single bed. Excellent condition. £60 ono 07761246655

SHABBY CHIC 5 drawer chest antique style hand painted in soft white £95 01704 897756

DAEWOO FRIDGE/FREEZER American style in excellent condition 6 years old - Grey/silver finish £149 ONO 01704830686

COFFEE TABLE Solid Honey pine with 5 drawers - 3ft by 2ft plus 2 "nested" small coffee tables 14inch square. £45 ono 01704830686

SIDE TABLE Beech side table / storage unit. One large drawer and one small drawer. 20 inches tall, 22 inches wide and 22 inches deep. £15. Formby. 01704833268

COFFEE MAKER Russell Hobbs coffee maker Model number 18623. Built in milk steamer. £20 Formby. 01704833268

BAGLESS UPRIGHT vacuum cleaner, dyson dc14, excellent suction, can deliver £40 Southport 214498

ARMCHAIR, Maroon tartan type with small wooden legs. On sale at Dobbies £199. As new £75 01704 875561

LEMAX ANIMATED SKATERS POND Skaters & accessories £15 01704 214017

LAMP SHADES FIT TABLE LAMPS Classic style fringed peach shade x 2 £10 01704 214017

WEDGWOOD JASPERWARE Blue 20 pieces 01704 214017

BEDSIDE OR side tables with single drawer and lower shelf. Current range M/S Padstow. As brand new. £60 each 01704821720

MIRROR WITH grey frame,arch top 800x600 .As new and solid quality. £22 cost over £100 01704 821720 or 07966101288

RUG JOHN Lewis Perth as brand new, 110 x 170 soft light green colour, cost £85 accept £22 07966101288 or 01704 821720

LARDER FRIDGE John Lewis Tall Larder Fridge in excellent condition and working order £100 ono 01704 870620

CREDA COOKER Ceramic hob double oven cooker in excellent condition and working order £ 100 ono 01704 870620

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HOUSE AND HOME

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MISC

LEATHER HOLDALL weekender bag. Telescopic handle and wheels. As new. £95 ono 07766244582

MEDICAL PRESTIGE AUTOCLAVE Good working condition. £400 07980 377958

COSTUME JEWELLERY Chunky and delicate, mixed colours, 9 necklaces 1 bracelet £6 07858 462998

RETRO COFFEE Cup and Saucer, vintage Adderley, fine bone china, deep turquoise gold edged saucer 'Fiesta' £8 07858 462998

FIRE GRATE and Ash Pan only, cast iron Firemaster 16" used, heavy 07858 462998

CARRY ON Laughing book, A Celebration foreword by Barbara Windsor 1st edition 1996 £3 07858 462998

TIE PRESS Mosley, wooden vintage, maybe flower press, nice condition £10 07858 462998

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REMY MARTIN Wooden games barrel £75. On EBay at £100+ 01704 875561

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EDINBURGH CRYSTAL Two wine glasses new in box £10 01704 880047

MISC

FACIAL SUNLAMP phillips hardly used healthy tan all year round cost £85 bargain £20 01515319425/07773242918

TRAVEL/BUSINESS cabin trolley case with multiple compartments in black v.g.c. may deliver £18 ono 01515263851

XMAS ITEMS incl lights, window lighted shapes (reindeer/candle/santa), small cottages (suitable for snow scene) + other items. From 50p-£5 (max). 07821417560/07855222552

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MOTHER AND BABY

ICANDY PRAM Pink&grey Pram with aluminium frame, inc carrycot, raincover, adapters& maxi cosi car seat. VGC. Aintree area £600 0725832258

BABY ITEMS bath, musical reclining chair, changing mat, pink, appliqued lined girl's bedroom curtains - all good condition, £10 the lot - Tel 01695 576983 01695 576983

NEXT PINK CURTAINS with butterfly and crystal decorated border. As new. Drop 54" approx. Cost £40 accept £15 07966101288

QUINNY BUZZ Stroller with Interchangeable carry cot. Includes, rain cover, insect net, brolly, foot muff. Smoke and pet free. Excellent Condition. £50 07709321569/01704870914

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MOTHER AND BABY

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SPORTS EQUIPMENT

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GOLF TROLLEY nice lightweight cost £49 aintree golf center used twice bargain £15 01515319425 or 07773242918

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TOYS AND GAMES

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TOYS AND GAMES

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ELC Magnetic letters and pink case. Great for leaning letters and numbers.Crosby area. £5 07598161812/01519249590

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TOYS AND GAMES

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TOYS AND GAMES

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Closing date 30 November 2016.

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DEATHS

DIAMOND TERESA

(Nee Coakley)

passed away peacefully 3rd November 2016

A diamond forever in our hearts

Sister to Tommy, (our kid), Mary, Michael, Ann, Issy, Helen, Peter, Jerry and Pauline

DEATHS

DIAMOND TERESA (Nee Coakley)

3rd November 2016

Peacefully in hospital aged 72 years

Loving Wife of Jimmy, devoted Mum of Jackie, Jimmy, Joan and Stephen, cherished Nan and Great Nan and a much loved Sister, will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at West Lancashire Crematorium on Monday 14th November at 10.45am. Family flowers only please by request, donations if desired for Marie Curie. All enquiries to Margaret Whitelam, Skelmersdale Funeral Service, 29/31 Sandy Lane. Tel 01695 559868.

DEATHS

LIDDELL ALISTAIR FORSYTH

Passed away peacefully in Warrington Hospital on Wednesday 26th October 2016

Much loved husband of Margaret, Dad of Kirsty, father-in-law of David and Grandad of Abbey and Ella. Will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Service and burial will take place at Widnes Cemetery, Birchfield Road, Widnes WA8 9EE on Friday 11th November 2016 at 10.00 am. Family flowers only by request.

DEATHS

WOOD WILLIAM TAYLOR

30th October 2016
Aged 89 Years

Dear Husband of the late Jessie, much loved Father to Anne, Father in law to Andrew, loving Grandpops to Amy and Laura, Uncle to Kenneth. Funeral Service at Emmanuel Parish Church on Friday 11th November at 12:15pm followed by committal at Southport Crematorium. Family flowers only please but donations are being gratefully received for the Alzheimer's Society. Enquiries and donations to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

DEATHS

VALENTINE SUSAN

4th November 2016, peacefully in Birch Green Care Home, aged 61 years

Dearly loved Wife of Gerard Valentine, much loved Mum of Frank Valentine. Step Mum to Mark, Judith and Mathew. Sue will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at Southport Crematorium on Friday 11th November 2016 at 9.20am. Family flowers only by request, but the family are receiving donations for Birch Green Care Home, Skelmersdale. Further enquiries: Co-operative Funeralcare, 22c Wigan Road, Ormskirk Tel 01695 577244

DEATHS

JONES SUSAN JANE (SUE)

3rd November 2016

In loving memory of the World's Greatest Mother and Nana.

May you have a safe journey.

Love you always and forever, your Son Bob, Vicki and Grandchildren Jessica & Bobby Isaac.

XXX

DEATHS

MONAGHAN DORIS

4th November 2016, aged 89 years

Loving Wife of the late Frank, devoted Mum of Mark (decd) and Frank, dear Mother-in-law of Karan. Cherished Nan and Great Nan of all her grandchildren. Will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at St. Richards Church on Wednesday 16th November at 11.00am followed by interment at Liverpool Road Cemetery. All enquiries to Margaret Whitelam, Skelmersdale Funeral Service, 29/31 Sandy Lane. Tel 01695 559868.

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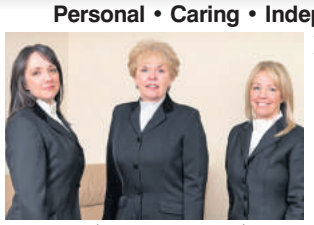

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DEATHS

SPENCER BRENDA

30th October 2016
Peacefully in hospital.
Aged 86 years.

Dearly beloved wife of the late Ron. Brenda will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. The Funeral Service will take place at St John the Baptist Church, Burscough, on Wednesday 16th November 2016 at 11.00am, followed by Committal at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough at 12.15pm. Family flowers only by request please, but if so desired the family are receiving donations on behalf of The Alzheimer's Society. Enquiries please to Cookson Tyrer Funeral Directors, 2 Smithy Walk, Burscough L40 5UU. Telephone 01704 897770.

DEATHS

STORM ANNIE

1st November 2016
Peacefully at Beaconview Care Home, Skelmersdale aged 104 years

The dearly loved Wife of the late David, loving Mum of Anne and Irene, dear Mother-in-law of Jim and Bob and devoted Grandma of Liz, Ian, Alan, Michael and Karen. Funeral service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin St, Burscough on Friday 11th November 2016 at 2.30pm. All enquiries to H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk & Scarisbrick. Tel 01695 722122/720012.

DEATHS

MOSS THELMA

2nd November 2016
Aged 86 Years

Much loved Mum of Roy, loving partner of Walter and Mother in law to Rhona, cherished Nana of Andrew, Alison and Annette, Great Grandma of Sam and Jessica. Thelma will be greatly missed by all her family and friends. Service at Southport Crematorium on Thursday 10th November at 2:00pm. Family flowers only please but if desired donations are being gratefully received for Parkinson's UK. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

DEATHS

JONES SUSAN JANE (SUE)

3rd November 2016
Peacefully in hospital aged 55 years

Loving Wife of Gavin, devoted Mum of Frank, Toni, Bobby and Laura, cherished Nan of all her grandchildren. Will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at West Lancashire Crematorium on Friday 11th November at 10.00am. Family flowers only please by request donations if desired for Susan Jones Cancer Support Fund. All enquiries to Margaret Whitelam, Skelmersdale Funeral Service, 29/31 Sandy Lane. Tel 01695 559868

DEATHS

JONES SUSAN JANE (SUE)

3rd November 2016

Devoted Mum to Toni, dear Mother-in-Law to Neil and cherished Nan to Adam, Taylor, Bailey and Lilly Jane. Loving and kind in all her ways, upbeat and courageous to the end of her days, sincere and true in heart and mind. Beautiful memories she left behind, in our hearts she will remain. Love you always.
XXX

DEATHS

DELOOZE JOE

1st November 2016. Peacefully at home aged 59 years.

Devoted Husband, Dad, Grandad and Father in Law. Forever in our hearts. The funeral service will be held on Thursday 10th November at St. Pauls's Church, Skelmersdale at 12:15 pm. Followed by Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough. Family flowers only please but donations will be gratefully received for MND.

DEATHS

ROLAND CATHERINE

6th November 2016
Peacefully

Daughter of the late Alfred E. Roland of Cremona, Waterloo. Will be sadly missed by her friends and family.

Funeral service at Sefton Parish Church on Friday 18th November 2016 at 10.30am followed by interment in the Churchyard.

Further enquiries to Cookson Tyrer Funeral Directors, 2 Smithy Walk, Burscough L40 5UU. Tel: 01704 897770

DEATHS

CAMPBELL-WILSON DONALD MODLING

2nd November 2016
Peacefully at home in Aughton aged 79 years

The dearly loved Husband of Patsy and a loving Dad, Step Dad and Grandad to all his family. Funeral service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street, Burscough on Friday 18th November 2016 at 1.45pm. All enquiries to H. Hardman & Co, Independent Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk & Scarisbrick. Tel: 01695 722122/720012

DEATHS

WRIGHT IRENE ELLEN

30th October 2016
Aged 89 years

Passed away peacefully with her devoted Husband Allen by her side. Mother to Allen, Grandmother to Edward, Thomas and Kathryn. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Service at Southport Crematorium on Wednesday 16th November at 2:40pm. Family flowers only please but if desired donations are being gratefully received for Alzheimer's Society. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

DEATHS

JONES SUSAN JANE (SUE)

3rd November 2016

In loving memory of my loving wife Sue. You filled me with happiness for over 19 years, and made me the man I am today. Life will never be the same without you, but you know you were loved always right up until the end and forever more. You put up one hell of a fight but it wasn't to be, I've never been so proud or in awe of anyone as I was of you over these last 8 months and throughout our life together, you will live in my heart until we meet again. Love always, your heartbroken husband xxx

DEATHS

JONES SUSAN JANE (SUE)

3rd November 2016

Such a beautiful caring Mother, I couldn't have asked for more.
She put everyone else first, she had the world's biggest heart and smile. I will never forget how she made me smile and laugh.
I will love and miss her to the end of my days.
To a Mother who will always be in my heart,
your loving Daughter,
Laura
xxx

DEATHS

EILEEN LECK

29th October 2016
aged 88 years.

Peacefully at home in Skelmersdale.Eileen will be sadly missed by her Son David and Grandchildren Jonathan, Amelia, Florence and Felicity as well as neighbours of Leeswood and her many friends in Skelmersdale, Merseyside and beyond.
Information and enquiries to Cookson Tyrer Funeral Services,Burscough 01704 987770.
Family flowers only please.Donations to Dementia UK if desired.

Announcements

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SHACKLADY MABEL
Nee Croft

Patricia, Tony, Adam and Amy would like to express their sincere thanks to family, friends and neighbours for their kindness and support shown following the sudden passing of Mabel.

Also for the many messages of condolence and donations to the British Heart foundation and Macmillan Cancer Support.

Grateful thanks to Melanie and colleagues at Hardmans Funeral Directors for their support and dignified arrangements and to reader Eleanor West for such a beautiful service and tribute to a very special person Mabel.

KELLS ERIC

Rhona Kells & Family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude and sincere thanks to all who attended, or in other ways supported them, during last Friday's funeral and committal of the late Charles Alexander (Eric) Kells. Particular thanks go to Lisa Hunter and her team at MLS Funeral Directors, for their advice & guidance in the planning prior to, and their impeccable management of everything on the day, and to the Rev Sue Guenault for her supportive visits and her lovely services at both Emmanuel and the Crematorium. The presence of the Mayor and other dignitaries from West Lancs District Council, which Eric served with pride for 19 years, was both noted and greatly appreciated; as too was the attendance of members from his other great interests, the Masonic Order and PROBUS. A special thanks is also accorded to the staff at Courtfield Lodge Care Home and Southport Hospital, whose care & love of Eric in his last months and days allowed him to pass away in peace and dignity. And finally, to all the friends and relatives who have supported the family during this sad time, thank you all so much.

BIRTHDAY MEMORIAMS

KENYON B.E.M CLIFFORD
Birthday Memories

12th November 2016

Those we love don't go away, they walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near, still loved, still missed and very dear.
Loved always by Wife Myra, Son Christopher, Daughter Lorna and All The Family
xxx

ZAC TAYLOR
12 years old on Monday 14th November

We never need a special day to bring you to our mind,

For days without a thought of you are very hard to find.

Thinking of you today and always,

Love Mum, Dad, Michael, Ashley, Callum and Flo
ZT1
XXX

ZAC TAYLOR
(ZT1 FOREVER)

Happy 12th Birthday to our Sunshine.

We never need a special day to bring you to our minds, For days without a thought of you are very hard to find, tears instead of wishes, flowers instead of cards, you left us precious memories that will stay within our hearts. "Miss you so much sunshine" Kelsey give our Zac lots of big hugs and kisses on his birthday.
Love you forever and always, broken hearted Nan and Grandad
XX

IN MEMORIAM

ENID ANDERTON
11th November 2006

Missing you, love you always.

Bryan xx

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IN MEMORIAM

WINCHURCH PETER
10th November 2009

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In our hearts you will always stay.
Loving Wife Carole, Gareth, Alison and boys
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- *Round includes:* Woodrow, High St (part), Whitestocks, Woodcroft, Wolverton
- *Round includes:* Windrows, Wigan Rd, Windgate

HOLLAND PARK
- *Round includes: Mercury Way, Wellington Cl, Earhart Cl, Harrier Dr, Penwell Fold, Hansby Cl*

UPHOLLAND
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ORMSKIRK/AUGHTON/BURSCOUGH
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- *Round includes:* Churchfields, Church St, Park Rd, Aughton St (part), Derby St West (part), Church Walks, The Stiles
- *Round includes:* Grammar School Gardens, Grammar School Court, Pinfold Rd, Merchant Rd, Mulbery Cl, Silk Court, Warpers Way, Spinner Mews
- *Round includes:* Red Cat Ln (part), Almond Ave, Laurel Ave, Laburnum Gr, Willow Cr, Cherry Gr
- *Round includes:* Red Cat Ln (part), Moss Nook, Mere Ave, Bank Ln, Mere Ct
- *Round includes:* Milman Cl, Prescott Gn, Prescott Rd (part), St Annes Rd, Wimbrick Cl, Town End Cl
- *Round includes:* Halsall Ln, Church Hill Rd, The Avenue, Cottage Ln (part), The Reeds

HOLMESWOOD
- *Round includes:* Holmeswood Rd, Smithy Ln

RUFFORD
- *Round includes:* Springwood Dr, Longshaw Cl, Rufford Park Ln
- *Round includes:* Beech Cl, Liverpool Rd, Thornton Cl, Station Rd, Manor House Cl, Church Cl, Diamond Jubilee Rd, Douglas Cl
- *Round includes:* Brick Kiln Ln, The Hawthornes, Hesketh Gn, New Rd, Willow Gn, Oasis Cl

SCARISBRICK
- *Round includes:* Southport Rd (part), Bescar Brow Ln, Bullens Ln, Jacksmere Ln

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(COTTAGE LANE, ORMSKIRK, WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH)
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2016

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Lancashire County Council have made an Order under **Section 14(1) (a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984**, as amended, the effect of which will be to temporarily prohibit traffic on the roads set out in this notice.

1. No person shall cause any motor vehicle to proceed over that length of Cottage Lane, from its junction with Halsall Lane, to its junction with A59 Holborn Hill in the borough of West Lancashire.

2. The prohibition will be operative daily from 0700 hours on Monday 7th November 2016 until 1700 hours on Friday 18th November 2016 or, until completion of the works within this period.

3. An alternative route for vehicular traffic affected by the closure is via: Halsall Lane - A59 Holborn Hill and vice versa.

The temporary prohibition is necessary to allow essential highways maintenance works to be carried out.

Authority given for this Order to be made:
Michael White, Network Regulation Manager
Lancashire Highway Services, 0300 123 6701

[Ref: HRiT16/08/5511/ARH]

Lancashire County Council
www.lancashire.gov.uk

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF MAKING
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(ROBIN HOOD LANE, CHEQUER LANE AND PIMBO LANE, WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH)
(REVOCATION AND INTRODUCTION OF 30MPH AND 40MPH SPEED RESTRICTION) ORDER 2016

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on 2nd November 2016 Lancashire County Council made the above Speed Limit Order under Sections 83 and 84 of, and Part IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, the effect of which will be to:

1) Revoke:

a) "The District Council Of West Lancashire (Various Roads, Crawford) (30 Mph Speed Limit) Order 1979" insofar as it relates to Ormskirk Road, Chequer Lane and Pimbo Lane from the junction with Newgate Road (A577) to a point 335 metres south of the point where Pimbo Lane crosses the centre line of the Wigan - Liverpool railway line.

b) The whole of "The District Council of West Lancashire (Pimbo Lane, Up Holland) (30mph Speed Limit) Order 1997".

2) Introduce a 40mph speed restriction on Robin Hood Lane, Wrightington, from a point 39 metres north west of the centreline of A5209 Hall Lane in a north westerly then north easterly direction for a distance of approximately 1,100 metres to a point 271 metres north west of the centreline of Courage Low Lane.

3) Introduce a 30mph speed restriction on the following lengths of road

a) Chequer Lane, Up Holland, from a point 10.5 metres north of the centreline of Ravenhead Lane in a generally southerly direction to its junction with Pimbo Lane.

b) Pimbo Lane, Up Holland, from its junction with Chequer Lane in a generally southerly direction to a point 186 metres north east of the centreline of Long Lane.

This Order will come into force on the 11th November 2016. A copy of the Order, and all other relevant documents may be inspected during normal office hours at the offices of West Lancashire Borough Council, PO Box 16, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, L39 2DF, and at the offices of The Director of Governance, Finance and Public Services, Lancashire County Council, County Hall, PO Box 78, Preston PR1 8XJ, quoting ref: LSG4/894.565/AFR

Ian Young, Director of Governance, Finance and Public Services
9 November 2016

Lancashire County Council
www.lancashire.gov.uk

West Lancashire Borough Council
Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Article 15

APPLICATION(S) FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Application No: 2016/0976/OUT Outline - Construction of 1no. dwelling and detached garage including details of means of access at Land At Aughton Chase, Springfield Road, Aughton.
This does not (or may not) accord with the development plan.

Application No: 2016/1093/OUT Outline - Housing development including details of scale and means of access from Becconsall Lane at Land At Becconsall Lane Farm, 31 Becconsall Lane, Hesketh Bank.
This does not (or may not) accord with the development plan.

Application No: 2016/1103/FUL Demolition of a timber framed section of the existing visitor center, internal reorganisation of existing office and retail space, and the siting of a prefabricated modular building to house classroom facilities at Meresands Wood, Holmeswood Road, Rufford.
This does not (or may not) accord with the development plan.

APPLICATION(S) AFFECTING A CONSERVATION AREA / LISTED BUILDING

Application No: 2016/0499/FUL Single storey extension to rear at 23 Briars Brook, Lathom.

Application No: 2016/1146/FUL Variation of Condition No. 1 imposed on planning permission 2016/0054/ARM to vary the approved plans to allow differing house type elevations to those originally approved and vary the streetscenes at Land At The Junction With Sluice Lane, New Road, Rufford.

The applications are available for viewing on the Council's website www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, the application can be viewed during normal office hours at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk and at 1st Floor, The Concourse, Skelmersdale. If you wish to comment on the proposal you can do so via the Council's web site, by e.mail to plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk or in writing to Development and Regeneration Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, but these must be received within 21 days of the date of this notice quoting the application no. Any comments made will be available for public inspection.

Applications for Minor Commercial and Householder Development
In the event that an appeal is made against a decision of the Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed development, and that appeal then proceeds by way of the expedited procedure under the written representations procedure, any representations made to the Council about an application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

John R Harrison DipEnvP., MRTPI — Dated: 9th November 2016
Director of Development and Regeneration — PDNOT922

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(BESCAR LANE, SCARISBRICK, WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2016

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Lancashire County Council have made an Order under Section 14(1) (a) of the **Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984**, as amended, the effect of which will be to temporarily prohibit traffic on the roads set out in this notice.

1. No person shall cause any motor vehicle to proceed over that length of Bescar Lane, for a distance of 20 metres either side of the Bescar Lane level crossing in the borough of West Lancashire.

2. The prohibition will be operative from 2300 hours on Tuesday 15th November 2016 until 0600 hours on Wednesday 16th November 2016 or, until completion of the works within this period.

3. No alternative route for vehicular traffic affected by the closure is available

The temporary prohibition is necessary to enable essential level crossing maintenance works to be carried out.

Authority given for this Order to be made:
Michael White, Network Regulation Manager
Lancashire Highway Services, 0300 123 6701

[Ref: HRiT16/08/4244/ARH]

Lancashire County Council
www.lancashire.gov.uk

PUBLIC NOTICES

LICENSING ACT 2003
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE

Application has been made by Aldi Stores Limited to the Licensing Authority of West Lancashire Borough Council for a Premises Licence for the Aldi Store at Ringtail Retail Park, Pippin Street, Burscough, L40 8AD. The proposed licensable activity is the sale by retail of alcohol for consumption off the premises each day of the week between 07:00 and 23:00.

Full details of the Application can be viewed at the offices of the Licensing Authority at West Lancashire Borough Council, Robert Hodge Centre, Stanley Way Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 8EE (www.westlancs.gov.uk).

Written representations can be made to the Licensing Authority at any time up to and including 2 December 2016.

It is an offence for anyone knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with a Licence Application. The maximum fine on summary conviction is £5,000.

Dated 3 November 2016
Freeths LLP, Solicitors.

PRISCILLA VIOLA PIERSON
(Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 24 New Street, Mawdesley, Ormskirk, Lancashire L40 2QP, who died on 18/09/2016, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 17/01/2017, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

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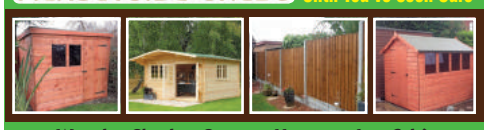
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BY THE TIME you read this a new leader will be preparing for a long stint pretty much at the top of the world pecking order.

They've had months of publicity behind them, and can call on 30 years' experience of being top dog in their field of expertise when they finally begin the enormous task of winning over hearts and minds across the globe, including right here in cosy old Britain.

The new Volkswagen Golf should have it nailed, then. But if it really were one of this year's US presidential candidates then it would emphatically be a Hillary Clinton in a sector secretly craving a hit of Trump-esque controversy.

For starters even Volkswagen itself freely admits the new Golf, being officially launched at the end of this week, isn't actually all that new.

Rather than being an all-singing, all-dancing MkVIII model in its own right it's actually a heavily facelifted and updated revamp of today's MkVII, which has been with us for the past four years.

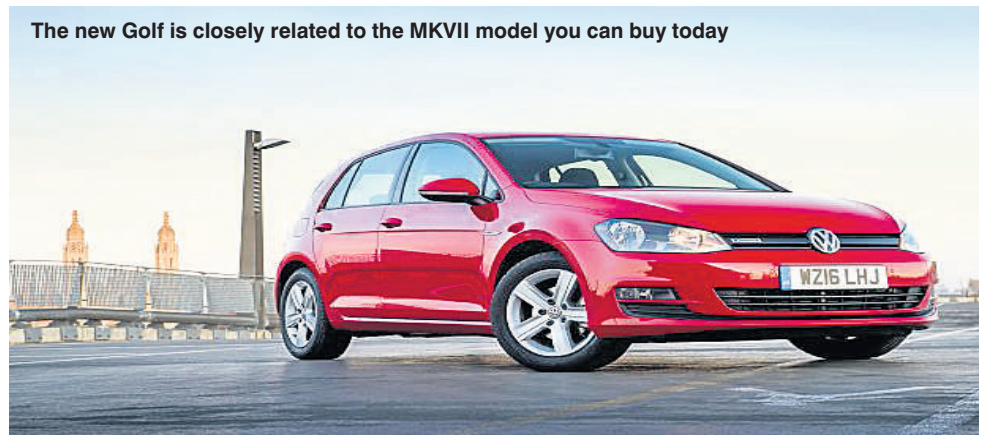
A car that you'd be forgiven for thinking doesn't look all that different from the MkVI that went before.

Which is great if you're the sort of family man looking a car that does everything you ask of it impeccably.

The Golf is beautifully built, holds its value well, practical enough to swallow five people and their luggage in a single gulp and – if you go for the GTI or R models – addictive to drive too.

You can have it in all sorts of weird and wonderful spinoff forms too; chances are you didn't know you needed a Golf in hybrid hot hatch form, but it's available.

But while it's a steady seller – in fact, it's the



The new Golf is closely related to the MKVII model you can buy today

fourth best selling car in Britain right now – you'll have to go elsewhere if you want something genuinely new or exciting. It doesn't seem that long ago that Ford realised its Escort was a bit rubbish and replaced it with the genuinely game-changing Focus MkI – a car that moved on family hatchbacks at a stroke.

At roughly the same time Audi treated us to a new idea – a shrunken executive saloon in its A3, and then BMW reintroduced the idea of family hatches being rear-drive (and therefore fun).

Each has been rewarded with regular appearances in the UK top ten car sales figures.

I'm sure the new Golf will be a steady hand at maintaining Volkswagen's grasp at the top of the sales tree – which is what it probably needs after the emissions scandal – but I really hope the proper MkVIII is a bit more radical.

The Golf deserves to be a bit braver – and if it is, I reckon that's how it would win hearts and minds.

David is the editor of Classic Car Weekly

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Deposit..... £0
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Interest Charges..... 0%
Total Amount Payable.... £8,340
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Interest Charges..... 0%
Total Amount Payable.... £8,940
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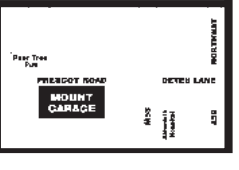

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First league win for Linnets

Burscough 2 Tadcaster Albion 1

BURSCOUGH picked up their first league win of the season in dramatic fashion after a stunning injury time strike from Connor Smith gave them all three points.

Tadcaster had taken the lead after only six minutes when referee George Warren pointed to the penalty spot when Adam Baker was hauled down by Reece McNally.

Dominate

Top scorer Tom Corner stepped up and coolly netted his eighth goal of the campaign to give the visitors the lead.

Burscough equalised on the half hour mark when Connor Smith picked up the ball around 25 yards out from goal and let fly into the top corner.

The Burscough equaliser didn't change the flow of the game however, as Tadcaster continued to dominate possession.

As the match entered into the 93rd minute, it was looking like both teams would have to settle for a share of the spoils, until Smith popped up to score his second stunning goal of the game.

A Burscough corner was cleared but fell to Smith on the edge of the box, who took a touch before firing into the top corner to give the Linnets all three points.

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Hazeldine opener can't save Skem from two defeats in a week

Stourbridge 2
Skelmersdale United 1

SKELMERSDALE lost their second game in a week on Monday night to remain rooted to the bottom of the table, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow.*

In almost a repeat of Saturday's gallant defeat at Rushall Olympic, Skelmersdale performed well but again came away with nothing.

The one main difference this time was that they went a goal up before being pegged back.

Stourbridge opened well but new signing Jordan Archer was thwarted by a well timed challenge by Phil Mooney.

Gradually a Skelmersdale side that were kicking up the hill got going and a tempting cross from Luke Wall didn't get a touch as it went across the face of the home goal on the quarter-hour.

In the eighteenth minute Max Hazeldine went close as Skelmersdale began to exert some sustained pressure and the ball went for a corner.

The away side then opened the scoring when Wall whipped in the flag kick and Hazeldine got to it first poking the ball into the net to give Skelmersdale the lead.

For a while Stourbridge were forced back, Chris Almond was doing well down the right and Skelmersdale's pace was causing the hosts some problems.

However, Stourbridge counter-attacked on 33 minutes and Skelmersdale did have a bit of luck as Archer got his aim slightly out by hitting the post.

Two minutes later Skelmersdale had no luck as a dubious free-kick was given by referee Richard Eley. It was dangerously positioned just five yards outside the penalty area and Canavan sent the ball curling over the wall into the top corner.

Stourbridge started the second half strongly and had Skelmersdale on the back foot.

They took the lead on 69 minutes, when Stourbridge put a ball over the top, a defender slipped and Brandon Hague ran through and slotted past Fearon.

Skelmersdale pressed in the latter stages, but a mixture of confidence and tired legs caught up with them, the nearest they came to levelling was an Almond shot that was saved by Gould.

● ***Skelmersdale's next game is this Saturday at home to Ilkeston.***

Frozen out in heated clash at Rushall

Report by **Neil Leatherbarrow**

Rushall Olympic
Skelmersdale United 0

LAST weekend, Skelmersdale put in arguably their best performance of the season during a heated encounter with high-flying Rushall – but still came away with nothing.

On six minutes Benito Lowe put a header wide off a Luke Wall cross, then on 12 minutes Max Hazeldine brought the first save of the day out of home goalkeeper Jose Veiga.

Skelmersdale had one more opportunity before the break when a Kenny Strickland throw-in created bedlam in the home penalty area but the ball was hacked clear.

Skelmersdale dominated the first 25 minutes of the second half.

A Tom Ince free-kick was only partially cleared and Strickland's shot was deflected for a corner.

On the hour Hazeldine headed wide from Wall's cross, then ten minutes later the game changed after a fine move from Rushall.

Midfielder Luke Bottomer picked up the ball in the centre of the park and broke through a pair of challenges and released the ball behind the Skelmersdale backline. Substitute Jazz Luckie was able to drive a powerful shot high into the Skelmersdale net. It was Rushall's first viable attempt on goal in the entire half.

Chris Almond had a goal bound shot cleared off the line by Eze on 82 minutes, before both sides lost their cool on 90 minutes for blatant time wasting.

The incident resulted in goalscorer Luckie aiming a headbutt at Strickland and the referee brandished a red card.

However, all it did was force ten-man Rushall to defend even deeper for the remaining three minutes.

Chris Almond in action for Skelmersdale. Picture by John Driscoll

Crunch game ahead for United

SKELMERSDALE are at home this Saturday to Ilkeston, who are sitting just above the bottom four in the Evo-Stik Premier Division.

Although they beat Skelmersdale 3-0 in Derbyshire last month, Ilkeston were not very convincing and Skelmersdale probably put in such an abject second-half show that most teams would have beaten them.

Tommy Lawson will be sweating on the fitness of both Tom Ince and Tony Rendell, but both are hoped to make it, plus another new signing is believed to be in the offing.

Two were made last week, both full-backs, Paul Foy who had spent most of the season with National League North Stalybridge Celtic was well known to Tony Sullivan, and left sided defender Dylan Smith has joined from Clitheroe after a spell as a full-timer at Accrington Stanley.

There is a midweek game next week when Colne visit for an Evo-Stik League Cup tie, but the strength of the Skem team on Tuesday, November 15 will depend on the injury situation at the club and on whether the management want to give one or two fringe players a chance to prove themselves.

Meanwhile, the club has extended its ticket scheme so fans who have a season ticket at a Premier League club can continue to get matchday tickets at the Uretek Stadium for £5.

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Champion
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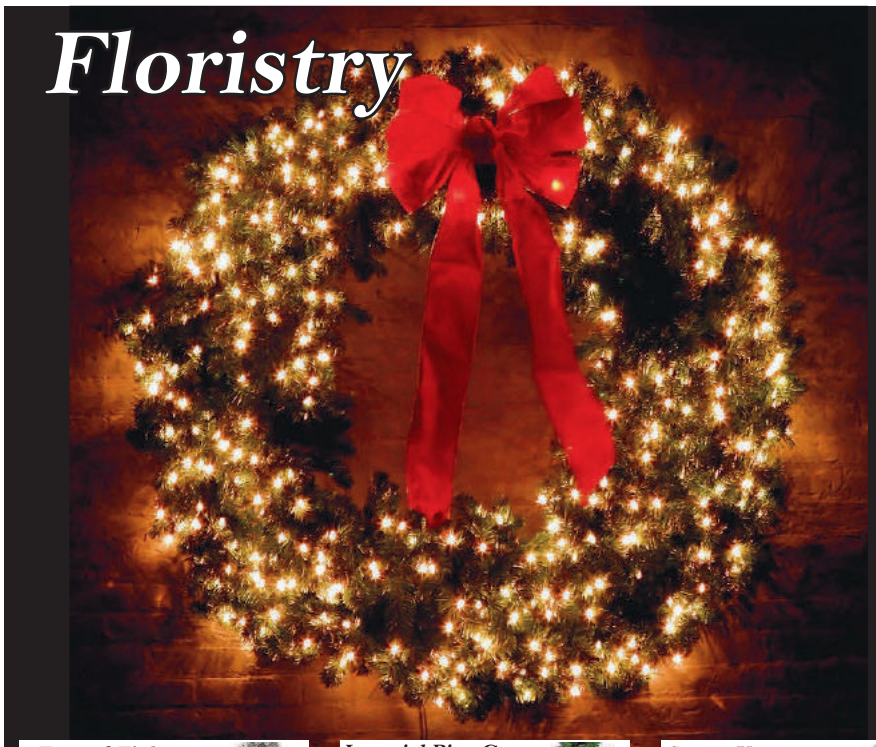

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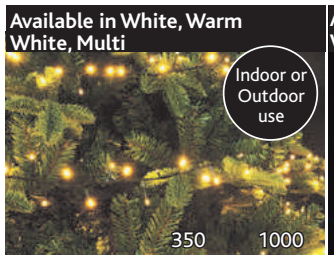

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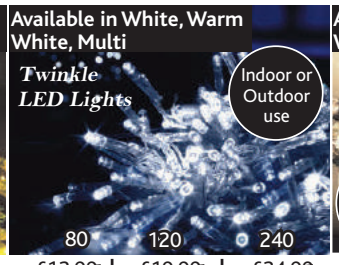

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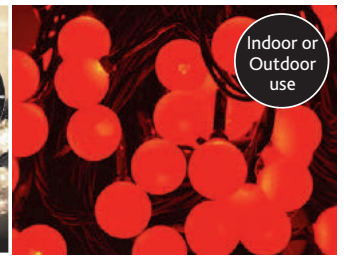

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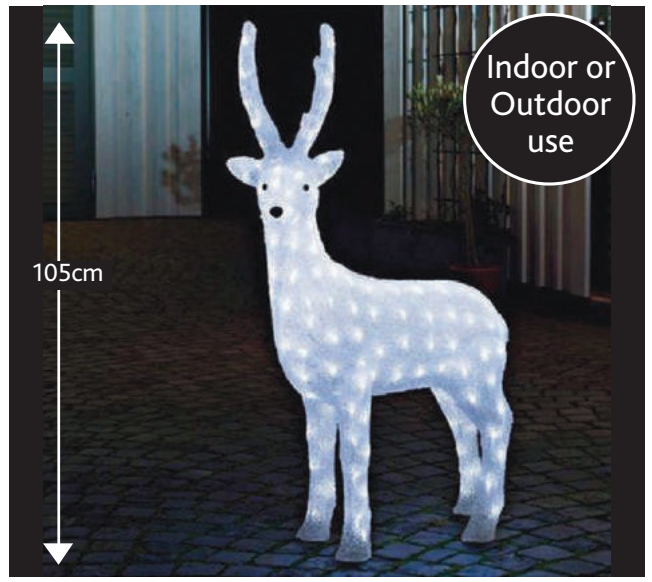

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When it comes to Christmas shopping you will probably follow millions of others, heading for the nearest large shopping centre.

There you'll join the flood of humanity flowing around the shops in wave after wave. You may well land your catch but you'll end the day, exhausted.

You will probably have spent more than you intended. You will certainly have spent a great deal of time, and measuring the energy expended will be an impossible task. For some this is an activity they wouldn't change for anything because it's all part of Christmas shopping. But is it necessary for you? Do you really want to go rushing suicidally round crowded stores? Perhaps this year you might like to consider something less harassing?

The answer is quite simple, don't travel miles to the shops - shop locally this Christmas.

It is an odd thing but we all tend to forget the local shops when it comes to times like Christmas. Yet there is little that is available in the large chains that you cannot buy in the smaller, local stores. Why then rush blindly into the unknown at a time when, of all times, we should know and trust the shops we are familiar with and use all year round?

Possibly it is because familiarity does indeed breed contempt. There they are, the local shops and emporia, all year through, day in and day out, serving our mundane daily needs with quiet, caring efficiency, only to be ignored when Christmas rears its head upon the far horizon.

And yet, if we only stopped to think and look, most of us would probably be amazed at what is on offer locally at this time of year.

Local shops these days are sophisticated places. Many of them belong to buying co-operatives or operate under the umbrella of large wholesale houses. They can often offer the sorts of bargain prices the larger chains can offer, and they can certainly match them when it comes to quality. Even if some items do cost a few pence more, are you really saving anything travelling further afield? Transport costs money whatever mode of travel you employ.

Then there is the matter of wear and tear on your own constitution such trips can impart. You have to contend with crowds, with unfamiliar shops, less than concerned assistants, bulky parcels, packages and bags to carry around for hours, and the constant, nagging fear you just may lose your purse, or even have it stolen. And once you have completed your expedition, you still have to get the goods back home, safe and intact. This alone can dictate the nature of the gifts and goods you buy.

None of this applies to local shopping expeditions. Parking is relatively cheap, sometimes free, and easy to get at. The shops won't be too crowded, and you'll be able to get help and advice from caring shop assistants when you need it.

You can be sure you'll get value for money and if you are honest, you'll not be able to fault the selection.

This Christmas don't prepare to do battle. Visit your local shops and look at what they have to offer. You'll probably be surprised, you'll certainly be very happy. You won't find the whole business of shopping for Christmas developing into the sort of deal that would have taxed the heroes of old.

Learn again to enjoy shopping as the pleasure it was always meant to be. Take the family and make it a family event because that, in essence, is what local shopping can be.

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BUY NOW AND Beat the Rush

"Shop Early for Christmas" is probably one of the most annoying phrases in the English language.

What is even more annoying is coming face to face with one of those persons who have actually done so.

There you are, back bent beneath the weight of full shopping bags, feet screaming for help, head bursting, purse woefully empty, shopping list still three-parts full, and you come face to face with one of these self-satisfied, irritating folk!

"I did it all last January in the Sales!" they gloat complacently. You resist the urge to hammer them into the ground with the proverbial blunt instrument, smile sweetly and stagger on. Christmas goodwill has never been so far from your mind.

Looked at in the cold light of a December morning, shopping one year, for the festivities of the next, does seem a touch clinical.

Somehow the magic of it all gets lost in the business of saving money, being ruthlessly organised and avoiding the hustle and bustle.

But there is an element of good sense in it.

Whilst it is probably a bit extreme to shop one clear year ahead, there has to be some middle way.

Now, for example, is not too late to start shopping early. The Christmas stock is coming into the shops fast, so whilst there is still a wide and varied choice, is just the right time to start.

You could even save money this way because you will have all the choice and you won't have to pay through the nose for expensive substitutes later on.

Shopping early before the true rush starts will also save you wear and tear on your nerves, prevent the body battering of vast crowds, and spread the load more evenly over the coming weeks.

Just think, if you get the buying over now, you'll have the rest of the run-up to Christmas to bake those home-made goodies that you normally never have time to do.

You'll have time to wrap the gifts artistically for a change. You will have the energy to decorate the house as it's never been decorated before.

So be sensible this year. Be merciful to yourself. Buying now means, not just beating the crush, it means buying that extra time in which to really enjoy the coming of Christmas.

Gift Buying IS AN ART

Most of us spend weeks pondering, how to get everyone on our Christmas gift list, just the right gift. It also seems, the better we know a person the harder it is to choose the perfect gift.

We ponder so much and so long we leave the actual buying till it's so late, we are obliged to fall back on those tried-and-tested standbys.

These, whilst they will probably be gratefully accepted, will nevertheless lack that extra element of surprise so clearly mirrored on the face of the recipient. Somehow it seems to signal a lack of thought.

Thought of course, is the key to successful gift buying. They say, "it's the thought that counts", and it's so very true. Unless we put careful thought into choosing gifts, they will go on, counting for nothing very much, as the years go by. What then is the answer?

Constructive thought is what is required and for this you need to be as methodical as possible.

Make a list of all those you intend to buy for. Next, list some salient facts about each person. Finally decide how much you intend to spend on each gift.

This list should be your 'bible' during the shopping trips you make. Never let it out of your possession. Refer to it every time you look in a shop window, wander round a store or enter a shop.

Be flexible in your perambulations round the shops. Be prepared to see and buy in unexpected places. Even your local petrol station can often come up with the perfect gift.

One thing you mustn't do is give totally unsuitable gifts. If you are buying for a child, make sure the toy or whatever, is suitable for the age group of that child. If you're buying for someone on a diet, giving them chocolates, is cruel. If a member of your family has a blood pressure problem, don't give them booze. This may all seem fairly obvious but you would be surprised how often people fall into the trap of unsuitable gift buying, especially when panicking at the last minute.

The most acceptable gifts are those that fulfil an unusual function in the recipient's life, or which can be looked at with pleasure day after day in the ensuing year.

Try to do the unexpected in your giving. If you give a book, try to get a first edition signed by the author. If you give something to ornament the house, try to make it an original work of art.

If your target doesn't have a hobby, give them a starter kit for one. If they are getting on in years, give them something to promote their comfort or make life easier day to day.

This year the shops are fuller than ever before with wonderful things to give. There really is no excuse for not exercising intelligent gift giving this year. Such gifts will still be remembered next Christmas.

This **Christmas** why not let us do the dinner?

Try our **Christmas Selection Pack** for only **£37.95**

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The Magic of Christmas at Warbreck

ADVERTISING FEATURE

This festive season sees Warbreck Garden Centre spectacularly change into one of the most inspiring and exciting shopping destinations in the region.

A trip to Warbreck is like stepping into a magical winter wonderland. You are guided through a mesmerising array of themed displays. Around every corner is another surprise.

With a tasteful and sophisticated blend of Christmas decorations, interior furnishings and gifts everything you might need for this festive season is under one roof.

"Warbreck has a great feel about it. Calm and welcoming yet clearly driven by a great passion for high standards. All the staff seem to ooze enthusiasm and thrive on going the extra mile for their customers. It's such a refreshing experience and great to escape the hustle and bustle of the high street!"

Once you've wandered around the beautiful displays and soaked up the festive atmosphere, the Plantation Restaurant is the perfect place to relax and take some time out. With delicious homemade meals, snacks and cakes available to enjoy in homely surroundings this is an exceptional food venue from breakfast through to afternoon tea.

Festive lunches are available from £13.95 for 2 or 3 courses throughout December. Bookings are now being taken. Contact the Restaurant or visit their website for menu options.

Don't forget to look out for Warbreck's amazing Frozen party events.

On Wednesday 23th November the garden centre will be hosting a Ladies Night between 5pm - 8pm. This is a great chance to get into the spirit of Christmas with a Bucks Fizz reception, food tasting, festive demonstrations and some great offers. Free entry, everyone welcome.

The garden centre have an exclusive loyalty card scheme which offers its customer's great offers every visit together with regular gardening tips and priority booking for many of its events.

Its Grapevine privilege customers receive 5% off their everyday shopping and a buy one get one free on hot drinks every visit.

Located on Lyelake Lane (B5240) in Lathom just minutes from Junction 3 of the M58, Warbreck is easily accessible from Maghull, Burscough, St Helens, Skelmersdale and Up Holland.

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Traditional CHRISTMAS FOOD

This is by far one of the main preoccupations at Christmas. Will she like it? Will he wear it? Will they play with it?

A feast is a sumptuous meal. It is also something affording great pleasure to the senses and intellect. It is a day or days regularly set aside for a commemorative or religious purpose. It also means to entertain lavishly, to delight, to gratify, to eat heartily and to dwell delightedly.

A large part of the celebrations at Christmas involves eating and drinking, sometimes to inordinate excess. Many people become so overcome with guilt at all the junketing, they question its morality.

Apart from the actual victuals themselves, the Christmas binge is not without its justification in historical terms. Christmas is a feast, and the word feast has many meanings, none of which are far divorced from this annual festival.

All of these meanings imply pleasure and satisfaction both sensually and spiritually, and so the standard is set merely by our language, for a rip-roaring, happy-go-lucky, food-filled, boozy celebration for all concerned.

Having established the credentials of the Festival, we may now consider the actual foods of which we partake in more or less vast quantities at this jolly time of year.

They are well worth looking closely at because whereas some have their origins lost in prehistory, others have been adopted more recently, though they are nevertheless, still as essential to the day as their older companions.

Mince pies date from around Tudor times. They represent the nativity. The contents are the gifts of the Magi. The pie itself is a cradle into which once a tiny pastry baby was laid.

Oliver Cromwell forbade their making and consumption expressly. His belief was they were Popish remnants of superstition and had no place in Puritan England. Perhaps he was not so far out in his estimation however?

There is evidence that indicates in earlier times, similar pies were placed on altars by barren women in the hope they would be given a child by whatever god they were worshipping at the time. There are even possible links with old witchcraft practices and human sacrifice.

Christmas or Plum Pudding is probably even older in its origin. Certainly, and again in Tudor times, it appeared as a standard traditional dish for Christmas. It was a porridge-like mixture full of dried fruit, minced meats, wines, spirits, ale, rare spices, and anything else the maker could find to put in. It was probably first made because with the limited cooking means available to prehistoric peoples, one fire and one pot were all they had in which to prepare the feast.

The contents were very much representative of all the good things in life, and therefore suitably put together to give the gods notice of the things required for the coming year. They were also probably a thank-you gift for a good harvest. Part of the original puddings would have gone on sacrificial altars, the rest being eaten by the celebrants.

With the Restoration came the habit of distributing portions of the Christmas pudding to household servants, friends and relatives absent from the feast. In the case of the Monarch, portions also went to absent, faithful subjects.

Christmas cake was again a reminder of ancient sacrifices made at the winter solstice though the habit of icing it came much later, probably in the 18th century.

Icing has been around since medieval times, however it was treated as an item on its own, and appeared only in the households of the wealthy. Sugar was a rare commodity and turning it into fantastic, edible sculptures was an art practised only for very special occasions.

The original meats consumed at Christmas would have been beef, veal, venison, fowls of all sorts, ducks, geese and game birds. Turkeys came to us from the New World and only really took on in this country at the beginning of the last century. Before that, if one meat only were partaken, it would invariably have been goose.

Up and down the country you can still come across the annual Goose Fairs, though these modern events are but pale reflections of the great gatherings of huge flocks of geese driven to the kill at Christmas.

Drinking of course plays a large part in the celebrations and is a habit itself that has come down to us through the ages. In the days when tea and coffee were rare items or even before their importation to these islands, people drank water, fruit concoctions, home brewed ales, wines and spirits distilled in the home. They were not unusual, they were the only alternatives. It was natural therefore that the best brews, the purest distillations and the finest wines should be reserved for consumption on feast days. Even this is a habit that fades back in memory to times before we even wrote down our habits.

All this goes to prove there really is nothing new in life today. We are doing no more in our feasting, than treading in the footsteps of ancestors some of whose antiquity we can only begin to guess. Such traditions cannot be wrong, they are a part of us, a part of our lives and our futures. They are part of the very essence that is Christmas.

This year, make a donation by all means, to those less fortunate than yourself, but don't give up your own feasting. To do so would be to deny your very nature.

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LET'S GO OUT AND Wine & Dine

There's something very special about a perfectly prepared meal, served with panache in beautiful and comfortable surroundings. It can help celebrate in a very unique way, any special time of year.

Christmas is of course the most special time of the whole calendar, and eating out over the season, a perfect and traditional way to enjoy the festival with all your family and friends.

Caterers, no matter how excellent at other times of the year, still pull out all the stops at Christmas. Special menus are devised. Special meals are created. Restaurants, whether standing alone, or part of pubs, clubs and hotels, are decorated in the traditional, seasonal way.

Party bookings are particularly welcome, and special entertainments are put on, to help the party mood go with a swing.

There are several good gastronomic ways of marking the coming of this very gastronomic season.

You can have a traditional Christmas lunch, most restaurants put these on daily for several weeks before Christmas actually arrives.

The menu usually comprises Christmas fare with all the trimmings, with thoughtful additions for those who might just prefer something else. This provides an ideal opportunity to entertain business colleagues, clients, customers, friends or relatives, with an intimate, festive repast.

Then there are the evenings.

Party bookings enable groups of colleagues, entire departments, whole firms, complete family groups, associations, club members, or just good friends, to gather together and enjoy a memorable evening out.

Special menus, seasonal trimmings, discos, bands and groups, are laid on by caterers to please their guests and keep them happy the whole evening through. Party bookings of this sort are usually tremendous bargains and can be about the best value for money in dining out, it is possible to find.

Of course, the very best value for money is wining and dining out on Christmas Day. This is becoming more popular with every passing year. It offers several very real advantages. It relieves at least one member of the family of all the work. It doesn't require clearing up afterwards.

It allows the lonely the opportunity of enjoying this festive meal in company. And because it is prepared by professionals, it is always a meal worthy of the occasion and a joy to eat in itself.

Christmas Day menus are well worth the booking. Normally several courses of mouth-watering traditional foods are offered, with one or two luxury alternatives for those with special dietary needs or simply a requirement to have something a little different for once.

Diners can be sure too that the wines ordered to accompany the food will be of excellent quality and served at just the perfect temperature.

Of course all this costs a little bit more. However, when you think of the service that is provided, not to mention the cooking and clearing away, really the Christmas Day meal is probably the ultimate bargain of all.

This year, try a festive meal or two at your favourite restaurant, at sometime during the hectic weeks leading up to The Day.

Gather a group of friends or colleagues together and book a party meal and entertainment. And if you really want to give mum the very best present of all, book a Christmas Day meal for all the family.

That way you can be really sure, everyone you know and love, will have the very best Christmas ever!

Time to PARTY!

Just because Christmas is still a few weeks away is no excuse for pushing thoughts of it to one side! It is after all never too early to start making arrangements!

In fact if you are thinking of organizing a festive meal out in the company of a group of friends, workmates or family, you really need to be doing rather more than just thinking about the idea right now.

Christmas festive meals have become more and more popular over the years. Instead of a 'one-off' affair occurring just the once, such meals have become a workplace tradition, a normal part of the Christmas celebrations. Naturally, with so many people aiming to eat and drink merrily in honour of the festivities, the possibility of getting your booking in, just where and when you want it, becomes more and more remote - unless you get really organized and book very early. And of course, the larger the numbers attending, the more difficult it will be to get slotted in. Most caterers can fit the odd two to four diners in at the last minute, but a party of fifty or more - no way!

If you have chosen the venue and made that provisional booking, you can start considering the menu. Generally speaking, caterers have a special selection of dishes for the party season. In the ordinary way of things you might well be able to leave the ordering until you arrive. For big parties however, caterers prefer to have the orders, for the main courses at least, placed in advance. It is after all, rather difficult, even in a commercial kitchen, to have fifty or more meals cooked and served all at the one time without a little prior preparation.

It is at this stage that you should mention any special meals or diets that will be needed. Vegetarians, vegans, those with gastric problems, those who don't like certain vegetables, people with allergies to certain artificial colourants, flavourings or preservatives, can all be amply catered for by today's restaurateurs - as long as they have reasonable warning.

Entertainment is another thing that party organizers must think about. Some catering establishments provide it automatically and include its cost in the price of the meals. Others will arrange entertainment at an extra charge payable by those attending. Yet other establishments leave the party organizers to arrange their own entertainment, merely providing the space.

Again, Christmas is a busy season for entertainers whether they are live performers, disco operators or providers of Karaoke Naturally the best entertainers get booked up fast, very early on so, if it's entertainment you want, don't delay. Discuss it with those who will be attending the meal, or the caterer, and again, get booked up fast.

Organizing your group of people can be something of a headache, and the bigger the party, the bigger the headache will be. People will express interest then do nothing more about it. People will forget to add their names to the list as it is circulated. Some will drop out at the last minute, and some will fail to respond till it is almost too late.

Finally do check that all members of your group have a copy of the menu they have chosen, a receipt for the deposit they have paid and some details of the establishment they are to attend. This could comprise a map, public transport directions, information concerning parking, and date and time they must attend for the meal. That way no-one will be able to say they didn't know where, when and what the occasion was all about!

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Dressing-up YOUR HOME

Christmas in the home usually means festive decorating. Somehow it is difficult to celebrate this special time without the embellishments that now normally go with it.

How you go about the decorating, and what it costs, depends very much on how you and your family see the exercise.

If you go the whole hog, decorate the place up to the nines and then burn the lot ritually on Twelfth Night, it will cost a veritable fortune every year. Much better therefore, to take the baubles down carefully and bring them out, year after year, adding to your collection as time, finances and inclination allow.

There is a wealth of decorating materials in the shops just now costing from pence to pounds. Decorations range from tiny springs of plastic holly for the Christmas cake, to enormous fake Christmas trees that look so real you could be forgiven for trying to plant them out for next year!

In fact the simplest things probably make for the most spectacular displays. Natural greenery, decorated bare boughs, flowers and pot plants, fruit and nuts, suitably presented, take a lot of beating.

Add these to a little ingenuity, a spot of invention, a vivid imagination, and you'll have a home dressed to kill, and it'll hardly cost more than a pound or two.

Decorate to a theme for best results, take a colour or shape and build your decorating theme round it. Fans for example can look stunning standing upright along the edge of a shelf, especially if they are linked by bows and ribbons, or bright tinsel garlands.

Baskets can be another theme. Tiny wicker creations, filled with seasonally coloured flowers, fruit or sweets, hung in groups from corners, light fittings or in front of a window, can look quite spectacular.

If you are short on ideas, have a look at what your local department store is doing this year. Generally these professionally invented displays look very expensive.

Look closer however and you'll probably find they have been made from basically inexpensive materials put together with colour, flair and sticky-backed plastic.

Decorate the fruit bowls. Cover some of the fruit with foil or coloured tissue. If you don't have sufficient bowls, cover an old flower pot, bulb bowl or box, with wrapping and fill with fruit in the usual way. If you wish to display flowers, make your vases seasonal by covering them too with gaily coloured paper or foil. Gift wrappings make very suitable materials for this purpose.

Candles have a seasonal quality about them, especially the brightly coloured red and green ones. Make your own candle displays on a saucer with the candle and other decorations set in oasis.

Decorations can include sprigs of holly or pine, artificial or dried flowers and the odd ribbon, assembled round the base of the candle so both oasis and saucer are concealed.

They can look professional and expensive, as well as attractive. In all your displays, don't overlook the usefulness of pine cones, grasses, bare branches and even drift wood.

Do be careful about lighting candles though. Never light them if they are part of an inflammable set-piece decoration or display.

Choose your Christmas tree with care. Natural trees are lovely of course but unless you are very careful, even if the roots have not been disturbed, the needles will start to drop as soon as the warm air of the home touches them.

Artificial trees last for ever and retain their built-in good looks, year after festive year.

Part of dressing the house includes dressing the festive table. Be wise, unless it's just you and your partner, go for paper tablecloth and napkins.

White looks lovely but there is a whole spectrum of colours to choose from, either plain or printed with festive motifs.

Make a colourful centrepiece either with candles, fruit or a combination of both, and your table will set the scene for the very best Christmas dinner ever.

What's more, there will be no linen to launder when it's all over, and one less job to do should be good news all round.

Christmas IS SERVED
We love nothing more than a bit of festive cheer at Lady Green so we have added some fabulous Christmas treats into our normal menu.
From a bacon, brie and cranberry ciabatta to crispy brie wedges, Cinnamon cappuccino to an indulgent Turkish Delight Hot Chocolate there is something to suit all tastes any day of the week.
Festive menu from 14th November

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History OF THE CHRISTMAS CARD

The first Christmas cards went on sale at the offices of Felix Summerley's 'Home Treasury' in Old Bond Street, in London, and they were sold out only days after first appearing. The picture on the card was one we should recognise today, a family merrily sipping wine. This main picture was flanked by two smaller panels depicting acts of charity, and the card bore the legend - 'A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You' - little changes!

Much controversy surrounds their invention. The credit is usually given to a certain Sir Henry Cole, the first director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, along with his friend, Royal Academician John Calcott Horsley. The artist was commissioned to design a Christmas greeting that could be sent by Cole to all his friends. This was done in 1843. Three years later, in 1846, Sir Henry suggested to a printer friend that he reprint 1000 copies of his original design, and they were sold at the then rather large price of one shilling each.

There were however, rival contenders for the honour of being the card's inventor. These include the Reverend Edward Bradley and the painter W. Dobson. Dobson's hand-painted cards appeared 1844 when he sent one to each of his friends instead of writing his usual Christmas letter. 1844 was also the year Mr. Bradley had a set of cards of his own design, lithographed and circulated to his friends.

There is a record of a card design appearing earlier than even the Horsley-Cole version. A sixteen-year-old apprentice printer, one William Maw Egley, designed and sent out a set

of Christmas cards in 1842. It has been speculated that Sir Henry Cole in fact 'liberated' the idea from the young man's own, having come across him in the course of doing business with the printing firm to which young Egley was articled.

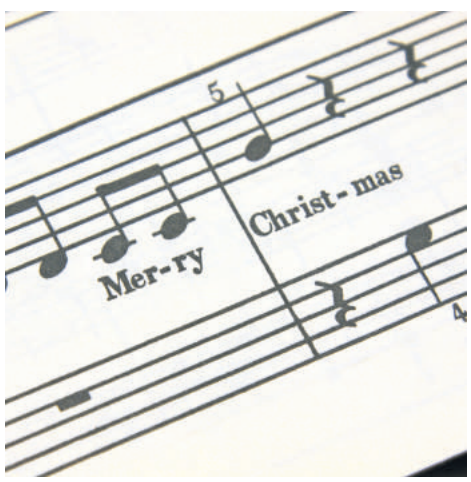
In fact, the concept of a Christmas card is rather older than any of the above. The only new thing about any of them being the name 'card' as applied to the printed item. It had long been a custom in Britain for boys away at school to write 'Christmas pieces' - specimens of their calligraphy skills executed on specially decorated paper. These were carried home at Christmas to impress their doting parents. It is more than probable the idea of Christmas cards came from a combination of this custom and the New Year cards that had been circulating in Europe since much earlier in the 19th century.

Not that the idea caught on universally. It took the invention of faster, cheaper methods of printing, to bring the price of cards down low enough for the man in the street to be able to afford them. By 1880 however, the custom of sending this type of greeting had well established itself in the list of British Christmas traditions.

History OF THE CHRISTMAS CAROL

According to the biblical account, angels sang the first carol after the birth of Christ. The early Christian church however was an austere and highly moral institution that frowned on such 'frivolities'. The holy fathers favoured the less exciting, Latin chants, so beloved of medieval monks and nuns.

The fact that Christmas was celebrated at a similar time as so many pagan celebrations however, ensured the thread of merriment and fun remained. This was reflected in the more earthy songs of the common people and their masters, in their halls during the feasting that went on during the festival. Carols in their own right swept unstoppably across Europe in the 14th century when the people, with an eye to the disciplines placed upon them by their priests, put new, more acceptable words to the old melodies.

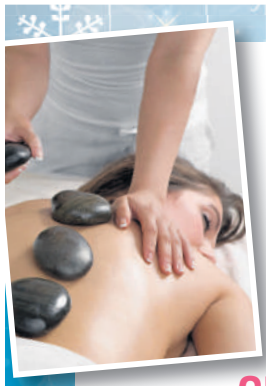
The word 'carol' itself has its root in fun. It comes from an old French word for a ring dance, and if you think about the oldest of our carols, you can still detect the rhythm of the 'round' in them.

The habit of carol singers going forth to sing to the public and perhaps collect a few 'goodies', really developed from the old custom of wassailing. A convivial group of folk would set forth with a full wassail bowl - wassail being a hot, steaming, spiced ale. As they travelled from house to house, they sang songs, shared the drink around, and the householder would then replenish the bowl for the next visit along the way. The origin of this is perhaps less happy, as it is almost certain it comes from the time when human

sacrifices were common. The bowl would have been full of the blood of the unfortunate victim. Each household would taste the blood to ensure fertility and a fruitful New Year.

The custom then moved on into the 18th and 19th centuries when 'waits' or watchmen undertook to serenade the households under their care, in return of course for a drop of something warming and some seasonal food. With the inception of a formal police force, watchmen became less common, and groups of children and young people took over the duty of carol singing. They continued to be called waits however, as the old meaning of the term had by then fallen into disuse.

In Britain we think of traditional carol singers as carrying a lantern on a pole, a hangover from the time when the watchman carried his own light about the streets. In other parts of Europe however they are known as 'star singers' and carry a large, glittering star on a pole instead. This is in memory of the Star of Bethlehem which went before the Magi on their journey to the Holy Birthplace.

In Poland, the singers dress up and at least one of them wears a goat mask. This is further developed in Sweden where the singers dress in white as angles, but one always dresses as a goat to represent the devil. Tyrolean star singers even have to tramp the snow-covered fields before they are received in homes, to ensure a good crop come spring - a direct throw-back to ancient, pagan customs.



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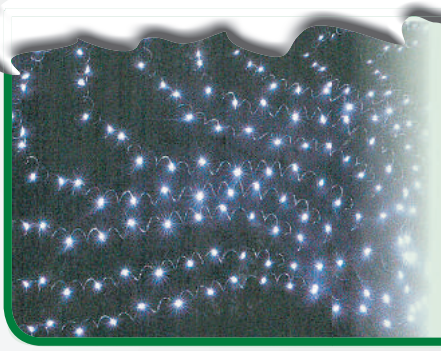

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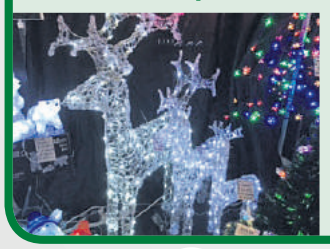

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